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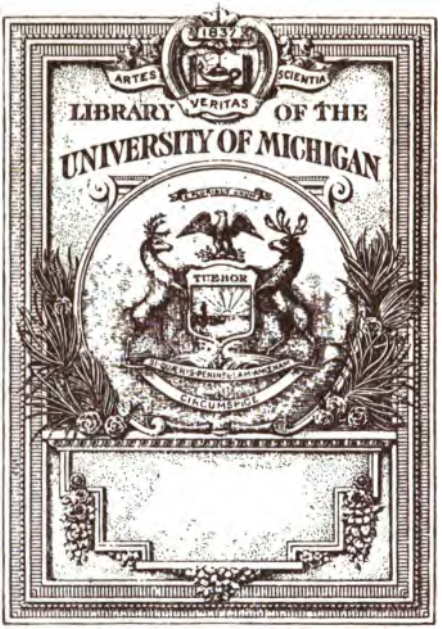
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THE AFFABLE STRANGER

THE AFFABLE STRANGER

BY

PETER McARTHUR



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY
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1920

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PREFACE

To make clear the purpose of this book and to suggest possibilities to the reader the author offers the following article which was published in the *Toronto Globe*. Most of the chapters first appeared in the same journal.

EKFRID, July 28. — This morning I got up feeling singularly cheerful and care-free. And no wonder. Yesterday I got even with the world — said everything I wanted to say about it right down to the last word. This morning I feel that I am making a fresh start with all scores paid, and I don't care whether school keeps or not.

The explanation of this unusual state of mind is quite simple. Yesterday I finished writing a book, in which I said just what I wanted to say — said what I have been aching to say for years — about the world and things in general. No matter what happens to

372118

the book, it has already served its purpose. It has rid my mind of "the perilous stuff, etc.," that accumulated during the war and since. And the result has been so refreshing that I have no hesitation in recommending the book cure to every one. Nowadays any one can write a book, and most every one does. The mistake is in regarding the book as a literary venture. What you should do is to make a pad of paper and a lead pencil your father confessor and ease your mind of its worries. When the book is done, you can send it out into the wilderness as the Israelites sent the scapegoat — bearing your sins with it. Then you can make a fresh start. If you don't want to publish it — though publication seems necessary to complete absolution — you can tie a stone to it and throw it into the lake, or do it up in a parcel and leave it for some one to find, just as boys used to do with neat parcels in which they placed pebbles on which they had rubbed their warts — hoping in that way to rid themselves of warts. I know there are some old-

fashioned people who will be shocked at this levity in speaking of books, but they should waken up to the fact that since the coming of the wood-pulp era no particular merit attaches to writing a book. And if books can be given a medicinal value to take the place of their old-time literary value, why should n't we recognize the fact? Anyway, the writing of a book put me in the frame of mind to parody Sir Sidney Smith and exclaim:

"Fate cannot harm me, I have had my say."

I have told all this merely to explain the joyous mood induced by the writing of the book. Having finished my task, I felt not only up-do-date with my work, but up-to-date with life. It is the ambition of every man — whether he confesses it or not — to get even with the world. The world is forever defeating us and defrauding us of our hopes. So let us have our say about it, turn over a new leaf, and make a fresh start. When I got up this morning

"I moved and did not feel my limbs,
I was so light — almost
I felt that I had died in sleep
And was a blessed ghost."

There was no feeling of responsibility about anything, and I could go to work in a care-free frame of mind. That made me realize how care-free all nature is, and how care-free life might be if we did not allow ourselves to become so much entangled with its affairs. Just because I had arranged to free myself from all other responsibilities while doing my task, I suddenly found myself free from responsibilities and in the only true holiday humor. It is true there was work to do, but I did not feel any responsibility. My first chore was to churn, but I was not responsible for the flavor and texture of the butter. It was my part to make the barrel churn revolve with a rhythmical "plop! plop! plop!" and when the butter came I had nothing more to do with it. By that time the heavy dew had dried from the sheaves, and the business of hauling in the

wheat was commenced. Though I had an interest in the wheat, I was not responsible for it, and could pitch the sheaves without worrying. The mood left by having poured all my problems into a book was apparently the same as that enjoyed by Kipling's devil when he "blew upon his nails, for his heart was free from care."

Along in the forenoon a thunderstorm began to gather in the west, and I was in the right mood to realize what a care-free and irresponsible storm it was. Even though it was harvest-time, this storm was not obliged to take any thought about what it was doing. It did n't have to pick the just from the unjust and distribute the rain as a reward — or punishment. It rained on both alike. Though it was such a care-free storm, I confessed to a feeling of relief when I saw it sheering off to the south. There are all kinds of just and unjust men living down that way, and though they may not have wanted rain any more than

we did, it was no part of my business to worry about them. It was enough for us to gather in our own crop and be thankful that, after all, the Hessian fly had left us a crop worth gathering.

When the storm had rumbled away, the sun came out, and it was certainly a care-free sun. It gave its stimulating warmth and heat to the weeds as freely as to the crops. If man wanted to coddle some plants for his own use, the sun was perfectly willing to do its part — but it did its part just as freely and irresponsibly for the grass and the weeds. In spite of the philosophers and teachers, Nature seemed very irresponsible to-day. She had been irresponsible in sowing her seeds and in promoting their growth, and it was quite evident that she would be equally irresponsible in her work of harvesting. The free and irresponsible winds would blow the seeds fitted with wings and parachutes to every point of the compass and let them fall where they would. The free streams would carry others to hospitable

shores or would leave them to rot in the lakes or even in the ocean. Other seeds provided with spines and hooks would cling to our clothing or to the wool of the sheep and in that way be given a wholly irresponsible distribution. Nothing in Nature seemed to be burdened with responsibility or care or remorse or worry or ambition or any of the things with which we fret our lives. Being in a wholly irresponsible frame of mind, I could not help wondering if man has not gone woefully astray in making himself responsible for so much. Perhaps we have not interpreted properly that text about being our brother's keeper. Certainly our brothers seldom feel grateful to us when we concern ourselves with their affairs and try to make them realize that we regard ourselves as their keepers. As a rule they resent our interference, and our efforts do little good either to them or to us. Perhaps we should learn something from the irresponsibility of Nature to guide us in our dealings with our fellow-men.

Any one who cared to write a book about it

could probably show that most of the wars and afflictions that have come on the world are due to attempts made by incompetent people to be their brothers' keepers. They start great wars to stop little ones, cause great evils by trying to remedy little ones, and otherwise make nuisances of themselves to the limit of their power. Why don't these people take to writing books instead of trying to set things right? Writing the books would free their surcharged spirits, and the world could go its way without bothering to read what they wrote. The more I think of it the more convinced I am that the writing of books would cure a lot of our evils — chiefly because it would help to rid the people who wrote the books of their feeling of responsibility for other people and their affairs. The fact that they had set down their views in fair type would ease their consciences and enable them to go about the ordinary little matters of their own lives in a care-free way. The book cure for our personal and collective troubles is

hereby seriously recommended. And it is especially recommended to any one wanting to enjoy a holiday. You can't enjoy a holiday if you are worrying about your business in life. So write a book about it and get even with the world. Then you can enjoy a holiday even while going on with your work.

CONTENTS

I.	The Affable Stranger	3
II.	The Elusive Insult	13
III.	Back to the Primitive	23
IV.	Grasping the Nettle	34
V.	Registering Reform	44
VI.	The Accused	54
VII.	A Burden of Farmers	64
VIII.	A World Drama	75
IX.	A World for Sale	85
X.	Organized for Profit	98
XI.	A Majority will be saved	105
XII.	Prince Kropotkin's Cow	117
XIII.	Old Home Week	126
XIV.	The Ward Leader	138
XV.	The New Master Word	145
XVI.	Loyalty	153
XVII.	The Shivering Texan	161
XVIII.	Many Inventions	171
XIX.	An Experiment in Modesty	179

XX. My Private Mahatma 186
XXI. The Soul of Canada 195
XXII. A Land of Upper Berths 204
XXIII. Epilogue 213

THE AFFABLE STRANGER

CHAPTER I

THE AFFABLE STRANGER

ONE day a group of Americans talked for publication without being aware of the fact. The democratic sociability of an observation car made it possible for me to get expressions of opinion on many subjects without the caution and frequent insincerity of formal interviews. No one knew the name or occupation of any of his fellow-passengers, and the conversation had "a charter large as the wind." For twelve hours, while making the trip from Montreal to Boston, the conversation ebbed and flowed over many fields of human interest, and by interjecting a remark here and there it was possible to turn the talk in any direction. Having a definite purpose in view and plenty of time at my disposal, I managed to get some spontaneous expressions of opinion along the particular line in which I am interested at the

moment. Before leaving Toronto I had been assured that I should be much irritated by the egotism of Americans regarding the winning of the war. With this in mind I resolved to take no part in the conversation if the subject came up for discussion, but to listen attentively.

For the first half-hour we travelled mostly in silence, entering the items of our expense accounts in notebooks after the manner of travellers, re-reading letters that had been read hurriedly before boarding the train, and generally putting our affairs in order before settling down to view the scenery and kill time on the long trip.

Finally the ice was broken by a breezy Westerner who had just made the trip across Canada from Vancouver to Montreal. He mentioned casually that he was from Seattle and at once launched on a eulogy of all that he had seen and experienced on his Canadian trip. Here was just what I was looking for, and at once I was all attention. It would probably have caused surprise and some indigna-

tion to ardent prohibitionists if they could have heard the traveller's remarks.

"The Canadians are not so radical as we are. They do things in a more reasonable way."

Then he proceeded to dilate with exultant particularity on the hospitality he had enjoyed in various centres. Good Canadians had not only given him much stimulating entertainment, but they had even seen to it that he was supplied with liquid refreshment on the trip from the coast. Only in Alberta had the aridity been at all noticeable, and he attributed his misfortunes in this respect to the fact that he had no intimate personal friends in Calgary or Edmonton to look after his comfort. I gathered from his talk that Canada is far, far from being bone-dry. While he talked there was a hopeful gleam in several eyes, which subsided when he began to lament the strict watch that is kept on the border and the danger of carrying a supply on the hip or in one's baggage when entering the land of the

ex-free. The joy had passed from his life when he had left Montreal. Then the conversation became general and raged over "the inhuman dearth" of plausible red whiskey under the Stars and Stripes.

Presently the breezy Westerner began to speak of his fellow-passengers on the Canadian trip. From Vancouver to Calgary he had associated mostly with two Canadian officers. Here, I thought to myself, is where I need to get a grip on my emotions, so I camouflaged myself behind a morning paper and pretended to read. But the precaution proved unnecessary. He showed an almost pathetic pride in telling his fellow-countrymen that those officers had told him that the Yankees were more like the Canadians than any other soldiers they had met in Europe. They had the same initiative, resourcefulness, and courage. This was received with approval, for all in the little group were willing to concede that there was no question about the war record of the Canadians. To my surprise no mention was made of

the fact that the Americans really won the war—which leads me to suspect that the conviction is not so general among the plain people as I had been led to suppose. It is true that certain spread-eagle papers have rather too much to say on the subject, and it is possible that some Americans like to get a rise out of visiting Canadians by assuming a patronizing attitude regarding the war, but the fact remains that during the whole day I did not hear any boasting on this point. The only remark that might have given offence was made by a lean, sallow New Englander. The talk had turned to the Peace Treaty and all were at once united in a common sorrow over the part that President Wilson had played in Europe. From which I gathered that all those present were Republicans, for not a word was said in the President's defence. The lean New Englander finally grumbled:

"Well, I think England got a good deal out of the war at our expense."

But he got no further. The Westerner

swept over him with a tornado of words. If anything of that kind had occurred — which he did not admit — it must be overlooked. The hope of the world lies in the continued friendship of Great Britain and the United States. Germany is far from being down and out and may even now be plotting against the peace of the world. There are dire possibilities in Asia that may involve both Britain and the United States.

When the New Englander got a hearing again, it was very evident that he had seen a light. Probably he suspected that there might be a British subject in the little chance assembled group, for he began to lay on the soft sawder in a way that would have done credit to Sam Slick. The only British people of which he had personal knowledge were the Canadians, as his business took him to Canada for several weeks every year. He could not speak too highly of their courtesy and business probity. What he had in mind when he made the offending remark was that making a Peace

Treaty was much like a "hoss-trade," and that as a "hoss-trader" Wilson had no show with crafty diplomats like Lloyd George, Balfour, Clemenceau, and the others he had met.

As my interest was centred in that part of the conversation which dealt with the attitude of the plain people of the United States toward the plain people of Canada and the British Empire, I shall not attempt to report the wide range of knowledge that came to the surface during the day. I may say, however, that I learned with interest that New York has the highest buildings in the world, Seattle the finest docks in the world, the United States the greatest military possibilities of any nation in the world, and that the Merrimac River turns more spindles than any other river in the world. I suspect it would be possible to write a book about the greatest things in the world likely to be heard of on this trip, but I am not forgetful of the fact that it was not the people of the United States that Rudyard Kipling had in mind when he wrote:

"For frantic boast and foolish word,
Thy mercy on thy people, Lord!"

In the afternoon I deserted the observation car and went visiting in the day coach among the passengers who were taking short trips between the intermediate stations. In this way I got an unconscious compliment that cheered me wonderfully. An exchange of newspapers with the man with whom a seat was shared gave an opening for conversation. Sticking to my resolution I did not introduce the subject of the war. We talked of the news of the day and all sorts of subjects. Suddenly my seat-mate gave me a searching look and asked:

"You are a farmer, are you not?"

He will never know how flattered I was. Being so far from home I felt that I could admit my nearness to the soil without being scoffed at. There is no doubt that in some matters Americans are much more discerning than Canadians — but let that pass.

We talked of the late spring, crop prospects,

the high cost of living, and such things, and at last my patience was rewarded. In a dreary tone he said:

"It seems as if people would never get settled down after the war."

I encouraged him with a nod.

"The war upset everything. Labor was unsettled by high wages. The country boys that went into the army got a taste of city life and life in crowds, and it looks as if they would never stay on the land any more."

I let him ramble on about the train of evils that had followed the war. There was no boasting — just a sense of weariness with it all.

On my arrival in Boston I became practically *incomunicado* and unable to play my rôle of the affable stranger who is willing to engage in conversation with any one who is willing to talk. It was impossible to get accommodations at the hotel to which I had telegraphed for a room. They had more reservations than they could handle for three weeks

ahead. But if I wished, the courteous clerk might be able to arrange for me at another hotel. As it was after ten o'clock, I wished. By using the telephone he located a room for me in a quiet family hotel. Its tone and exclusiveness impressed me as soon as I registered. I was in a position to see Boston on its dignity. The elevator man looked like a sad professor of political economy in reduced circumstances, and as I stepped into his cage I felt as if I had been turned over to the final psychopomp. With this in mind it gave me a thrill of pleasure to note, like Phil Welch, that the elevator was going up and not down. No one at this hotel spoke to another without an introduction, and I realized that I was having a chance to get a glimpse of that sternly exclusive New England:

"Where the Cabots speak only to Lowells,
And the Lowells speak only to God."

But a few hours later I was mingling with the ordinary throng again, looking for information.

CHAPTER II

THE ELUSIVE INSULT

WHEN a man starts on a journey he usually makes a plan before starting. He will go to this place or that at such a time or times: He will meet this man and that — and will say to them thus and so. If he is a man of trained habits — say a commercial traveller for an exacting firm — he will carry out his plans — or lie about them in his report to the home office. As my report is to be made to the public there is no need of lying. I have promised nothing and nothing is expected. My plans went all awry before I was in the United States two days. But what of that? I may not find the information I was after, but I am finding things that are interesting and amusing, so let us carry on. But first a word about those plans — for what happened to them was rather illuminating. It seems to cast a light

on the law of acceleration that I hear about sometimes.

It has been my experience that a mere observer — "a looker-on here in Vienna" — seldom arrives at the truth about anything. He sees only the outside of things. It is when one is actually doing things that he learns about them. With this in mind I deferred taking the present trip for many months. Not wishing to come as a holiday onlooker I waited until actual business made it necessary for me to come. This business would make it necessary for me to have dealings with men in various cities, and in order to transact it I would be obliged to keep step with that part of the business world in which I found it necessary to move. I would find the chance comments of business conversation more enlightening than any formal interviews, for they would rise spontaneously from the soul of things. With all this carefully thought out I started on my trip.

When I left the farm my plans were vague

and leisurely. I had business to transact, but it was not urgent. It could wait on my convenience and on the convenience of others. It was little more than a good excuse for meeting business men in their offices so that I could glimpse what they were thinking about when off their guard.

When I reached Toronto I found that it would be necessary for me to make my plans more definite and to speed up to a regular schedule. There seemed to be more in the business than I thought and it would be well to make the most of it. So I reformed my plans and prepared to step lively wherever necessary.

In Boston I was startled to find that further changes in my plans were advisable. The business looked better than ever, but if I was to transact it and keep step with the march of things I must exert myself and move fully three times as fast as had been planned before leaving Toronto. This would wipe out the holiday aspect of my trip, but it would give me

a more intimate view of the business life of the American people. I decided to rise to the occasion.

Then I went to New York and what happened to me and my plans may be indicated by my first experience in the city. Knowing that an old friend was located at a certain address on lower Broadway I decided to call on him before doing anything else. I found a real sky-scraper at the address sought. Looking up his address in the office directory I found that his room number was 3224. Being accustomed to office buildings and hotels where the rooms are numbered with the first figure indicating the floor on which the room is located, I expected to find my friend on the third floor. Stepping in the elevator I asked for room 3224, and was promptly whirled to the thirty-second floor. My guess at the location had been multiplied by ten. And I soon found that this kind of multiplication touched everything. If Boston made me move three times as fast as Toronto, New York would

make me move ten times as fast and far as Boston. Right there my plans went glimmering. Like Huck Finn, "I lost all holts." I was willing to forego a holiday, but I did not propose to invite apoplexy. Since then I have been doing business in a catch-as-catch-can way — and getting information and impressions in the same way. And what I am getting I shall pass on just as I get it — without plan or too much order. The impossibility of keeping step with New York without a long previous training has compelled me to give up the attempt and has restored me to the holiday humor I was in when leaving the farm. So now we can step lightly again.

One day many years ago I happened to be with the late "Billy" Garrison, whose memory still lingers in New York newspaper life. A bewildered individual approached and asked Garrison:

"Are you a Scotchman?"

"No," said the wit, "but if you wait a minute I think I can find you one."

That swift absurdity epitomizes New York. If you want a man of any nationality or from any place, you can find him in a minute or two if you care to search. In trying to get in touch with the United States, or even the whole world, it is not necessary to leave Manhattan Island. But I was not searching. I was waiting for mine own to come to me. In this carefree and receptive mood I met men from many States of the Union and from many walks of life. Some I met as old friends, some in the way of business, and some by the simple expedient of borrowing a match in a smoking-car or hotel lobby. As none suspected any motive beyond what appeared on the surface, they talked copiously if not always entertainingly. And I soon discovered the astounding fact that if my patriotic sentiments were to be outraged I must pave the way for the insult myself. The war and international relations never cropped up. Of course the Americans lack the irritant of the adverse exchange which touches Canadian business life at many points every

day and arouses wrath. As a matter of fact, the exchange gives their dealings with Canada and Great Britain an added zest and tends to make them take a placid view of the international situation. That in itself is enough to increase the irritation of a Canadian, but I could hardly make it a cause of argument, for exchange is a subject that I do not feel that I understand except in moments of exalted financial meditation such as seldom come to me. While I might feel sore about having my Canadian money discounted, the Americans were not sore at all. Indeed, they went farther and were unfailing in their sympathy. That hurt a little, but I could hardly treat it as an insult.

Still I was not without my moments of insight and amusement. I found that my friends and chance acquaintances, like those who talked in the parlor car, had one great grievance in common — the activities of agitators, Bolshevists, I.W.W.'s and all who are attacking American institutions. This touches

them more nearly than international relations or any criticisms that come from abroad. And all of them dealt with the trouble in the same strain. They are not afraid of these wild men or of their wild ideas. But they are hurt and humiliated to find that people exist, especially within the borders of the United States, who believe the kind of nonsense that these people talk. Real Americans feel disgraced that news of that sort of discontent should be going out to the world. The attitude seems to be one of shame and indignation rather than of fear or anger. They were hurt to find that any one — especially any one who had come to America to live — could fail to see the manifold advantages of living under the Stars and Stripes. No one was afraid that the radicals could accomplish their ends — they were simply a noisy, irrational minority — but it was an insult to every American to have these people denying that the United States is the finest country in the world. It seemed incredible, stupefying.

The man from Seattle on the observation

car was able to give first-hand information about the I.W.W. and he proceeded to do so volubly and emphatically. He pinned his faith to the chastening influence of an accurately applied bludgeon in dealing with this element of society, and told with relish of how I.W.W. leaders were beaten up whenever they tried to start something. He established his claim to being a true American by stating that although living in the West he was born in Boston and was descended from one of the seven men who had established the town of Salem. He was all for direct action in dealing with the advocates of direct action.

The sum of the matter is that the unrest is rousing American citizens to a keener sense of their heritage as descendants of the men who laid the foundations of the country, and they are inclined to be intolerant of any one who questions the soundness and essential rightness of American institutions. They have no patience with those who would overturn their system of government. The result will prob-

ably be a livelier sense of citizenship on the part of many who have been neglectful of their duties in the matter. They will not leave the conduct of affairs to those who cater to the forces of disruption. They are all for the America of their fathers, and this unrest will probably cause a rebirth of the old-fashioned American spirit. The danger is that a nation that has been roused to a sense of power by the war will act swiftly and intolerantly without discriminating sufficiently between those who would reform society and those who would wreck it.

CHAPTER III

BACK TO THE PRIMITIVE

Nor only is there nothing new under the sun, but in New York I find the same views, opinions, and conclusions that I had heard to the point of weariness even in Ekfrid. The transmission of news and the diffusion of propagandas have reduced the world to the same mental level. For instance: a friend placed his car at my disposal so that I could go about the city comfortably and expeditiously. Being full of questions I took my seat beside the chauffeur and invited information. He proved to be a skilled mechanic who had left productive work to drive a car in the city. He had been through the Spanish-American War, but had avoided the Great War, being past the age limit of the earlier drafts. He had had all he wanted of war. "War is simply a scheme by which the big men and the profiteers put it over the plain people. The plain people

get all the knocks of war and pay the cost of it besides, while the big men get all the glory and the crooks get the profits."

Nothing new about that. I have heard the same talk in Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Toronto, and even on farms. The plain people of one country are like the plain people of any other country. They feel that whoever won the war they did not win it. And they don't want any more of it. What they want is to square accounts with the men who made profits from the war, and then go through the rest of their lives without doing anything in particular on which others can make a profit. They even seem to think that they might live out their day on the profits that others have accumulated — if they could only have justice properly administered. Anyway, this business of working hard and letting others have a profit on your work is something that belongs to the old, stupid days before the war, when men were not awake to their rights and privileges.

This is really the philosophy of the Lotus-

Eaters, and possibly it is a natural reaction after the war.

Perhaps there is even a biological necessity for the aversion to old-fashioned work that is apparent under all flags. Possibly we might find analogies in nature that would cast a light on the subject. Let us consider the case of the bees — which moralists persist in pointing to for our emulation. Every bee-keeper knows that when a hive of bees takes to robbing other hives its usefulness is ended. Robber bees, that have once learned the ease and delight of plundering the accumulated stores of other hives, will never go back to the drudgery of gathering their food from the flowers. They will go on robbing until they are destroyed in battle by hives that are able to protect themselves or until they have starved in the midst of plenty because they refused to work. I do not know whether Fabre or Maeterlinck has studied the degeneracy and downfall of a hive of bees that has taken to robbing, but it would be worth their while.

But people will protest at once that the Great War was not a war of plunder. It was a war to fight back the nation that had started out to plunder the world. Blind! Every nation engaged in the war plundered itself even though it did not plunder others. All our reserves of wealth, food materials, and resources were of necessity thrown into the war and were as certainly destroyed or plundered as if we had been overrun by the enemy. When the armistice was declared we should have faced the future as nations that had been defeated rather than as victors. Unless we do that without further delay the defeat of civilization may be complete.

At this point my meditations were interrupted by my mild and pleasant-voiced chauffeur. He glared back over my shoulder with a real fighting face.

"What's the matter?" I asked in alarm.

"That driver back there gave me a look and I was giving him one back." I admitted that he certainly was giving him a look.

"Some fellows think they own the streets," he grumbled. "That fellow tried to edge me out of my place and when he found he could n't do it he was sore. A fellow like that makes me want to get back to the primitive with him." He glared back once more, but the other driver had disappeared in the traffic.

But his phrase stuck and it seems significant — "Get back to the primitive."

I wonder if my chauffeur originated it — or is it a gem from some propaganda that I will meet with when I resume my travels? Anyway, it is most excellent good. Getting back to the primitive is about the most natural thing that human beings do just now. For long and dark ages the world was ruled by big biceps rather than by big brains — and everything was primitive. And during the Great War we went back to the primitive with scientific thoroughness. The ape and tiger were not only given a new lease of life, but were trained and equipped for their work by the best brains of the world. To the ferocity of the

primitive we added the magic of science — but it is doubtful if science has enough magic left to recapture and cage the ape and tiger. The primitive man is proud of himself and conscious of his power. Indeed, he even feels benevolent toward a world that he feels competent to manage and control. And that serene kindly, capable attitude is the most dangerous aspect of the revolutionary mood of mankind. The anarchists and agitators we understand to some extent and can deal with. They are a natural reaction in a world of ruthless enterprise. But these placid, altruistic world-wreckers raise goose-flesh on me. They give me a grue. During the past thirty years I have met many anarchists and have not contended with them, for they know the wrong side of every subject so exhaustively that they can down any one in an argument. Though all of them talked violently, most of them were too human to do anything reckless. I have in mind at the present moment a tender-hearted anarchist whose whole soul revolted against the

injustice and cruelty of organized society. In theory he would have torn down governments, burned cities, and assassinated kings and plutocrats. On the platform and in the Red press he was terrible.

But the poor man suffered from a handicap that rendered him futile. He had a wife whom he loved and children whom he adored. If he did his duty and hurled bombs at the oppressors, what would become of his family? He could not do anything that might cause them distress or suffering. He had given hostages to fortune. But if he had been a free man — The conflict between his radical brain and his kindly heart furnished the most tragic comedy that has ever come within my experience.

But these serene altruists, often well-read and thoughtful, are much more dangerous than the most raving Reds. They are so sure of the economic soundness of their views and so kindly in their intentions that one almost feels ashamed to oppose them or laugh at them.

They are not parlor Bolshevists, but men who might be described as super-sane — men who are too rational for a mad world.

My first experience with this class was on the Western prairies, just before the Winnipeg strike. I was travelling on a branch railroad, and not being willing to wait for an express train I found accommodation in the caboose of a freight. Being thrown into the company of the conductor and trainmen I cultivated their society and induced them to talk. What amazed me was their satisfied certainty that the world was to be made over at once without a struggle. Capital, the great robber of labor, was to be eliminated. Government was to be taken over by the workers and all profits would go to those who earned them. As to the management of affairs — was n't that all done already by hard-worked, under-paid clerks while highly paid officials took all the credit? Take President Beatty, of the C. P. R. What did he do but sit at a flat-topped desk in a luxuriously appointed office and draw a big

salary while others did the work? They were not angry about it. They were merely ashamed that the matter had not been settled long ago. It was all so simple.

In Edmonton I met with more of these men who were about to shatter organized society and "remould it nearer to the heart's desire." One in particular impressed me curiously. He had the appearance of a man accustomed to hard labor who was taking a rest and meditating on world problems. His aspect was dreamy but kindly. I found him in the office of the Honorable Frank Oliver, and he was trying to induce that hardheaded statesman of the old régime to publish in his paper a prospectus for the new world. According to the new plan all the people from the farms of Alberta were to move into the cities, where they could get proper shelter when the big hotels and the homes of the rich would be taken over by the men whose labor had built them and had made them possible. I wish I had a copy of the document, but one phrase

that stuck in my memory will give a taste of its quality. The ingenuous dreamer proposed a method of dealing with the crops needed to supply food that struck me as unique. He proposed that when seeding-time came round, "joyous bands" would go out from the cities and put in the crops. Having some experience of the drudgery of farm work that phrase impressed me. Similar bands would go out at harvest-time and garner the grain. Mr. Oliver was so dazed that he did n't say a word. He passed over the document and waited for my opinion. I had nothing to say. And yet neither of us is without a certain command of language.

The cumulative effect of this contact with the new altruism was that, when I started for home from Winnipeg, I reminded myself of the soul of Stephen Leacock's Melpomenus Jones, which escaped from its earthly tenement "like a hunted cat over the back-yard fence." I hoped devoutly that my kindly friend of the prairie freight would not succeed

President Beatty at the flat-topped desk until we had been travelling for at least twenty-four hours. If we got through the rocky district and reached old Ontario, I could walk the rest of the way home.

Because of such experiences I am not unduly surprised at the kind of talk I hear among the advanced and kindly thinkers of labor circles. I hope to pick up a few more phrases as delightful as "joyous bands" and "get back to the primitive."

Surely, oh, surely it is high time that some one turned light and laughter on this muddle. Canada and the United States are alike in their need of a solution for this problem. They have more important matters pressing for attention than the question of who won the Great War. And, in concluding this chapter, let me record the astounding fact that as yet no one has assured me that the United States won the war.

CHAPTER IV

GRASPING THE NETTLE

We are told that the way to handle a nettle is to grasp it firmly. Never having had any need of handling a nettle, I have not tested the truth of this popular saying and consequently have some hesitation about using it in connection with our international relations. It is quite applicable as far as the stinging quality of the subject is concerned; but whether taking hold of it firmly will help matters remains to be seen. Anyway, I propose to set down the truth as I have found it without further persiflage or evasion.

It is beyond question that there is a growing bitterness between the United States and Great Britain — including the Dominions Overseas. On both sides of the borderline between Canada and the United States there are constant bitter expressions of opinion, and un-

less something can be done to check the evil the results may be disastrous. On the platform and in the press dislike and contempt are finding daily expression. What is the cause of this and what is its significance?

In the first place, there is the watchfulness and jealous sense of honor due to what Herbert Spencer has called the "bias of patriotism." Few patriotic citizens can avoid being irritated by any disparagement of the land of their birth. We are taught in the schools to be proud of our own country and to guard her rights even to the extent of giving our lives in her defence. This is something that has the approval of all governments and of most citizens. But the majority are firmly convinced that in order to love their own country it is not necessary to hate any other man's country. Though patriotism may be shown in the irritation between two countries it is not the cause of the irritation. We must seek the cause elsewhere.

During the later years of the war there was a wonderfully friendly feeling among the

Allied countries. Since the signing of the armistice the friendship has been vanishing and a growing cleavage becoming evident. For over a year I have been watching the matter closely, and now that I have had a chance to investigate on both sides of the line I feel safe in making a few definite statements. To begin with, I found in Canada that dislike of the United States is confined very largely to the platform and press. The plain people — the farmers and all classes of workers — have very little feeling in the matter. They simply want a chance to put their affairs in order after the war. What I have been able to learn while visiting the United States has convinced me that the attitude of the farmers and workers of that country is either friendly or indifferent to the people of Canada. Then why the attitude of the press and platform? They are supposed to voice the sentiments of the great mass of the people.

That may have been the case in an earlier and undeveloped age, but the situation has

changed. The partisan spirit which inclines people to stick to their own party organization through all vicissitudes of public opinion practically cancels their political influence. A million hidebound Conservative voters who can be depended on not to change their opinions will cancel a million hidebound Liberal voters. Therefore, the press and platform — not to mention the political workers who use more sordid and corrupt methods — direct their efforts to capturing the remaining vote that through ignorance, high-mindedness, discontent, or any other reason is not attached to either party. Thus it becomes evident that the utterances of the press and platform do not voice the sentiments of the mass of the people. They merely show the efforts that are being made to capture the floating vote which will finally decide in any election. They are sectional and often criminally reckless. There is no need of giving specific instances of the attempts to capture any particular group of voters outside of the party folds either in the

United States or Canada. Every reader can call to mind instances where this has been done.

But this does not deal with the specific grievances that are aired in official utterances. Quite true, but it casts some light on the reason for airing them. But if we are to handle this nettle we must deal with these grievances.

Very well. First there is the egotism of Americans regarding the part they played in the war. This finds expression, not only in the press and from the platform, but in the movie shows. (As the movies play so important a part in making trouble I shall devote a separate chapter to them.) Then there is the question of exchange.

The adverse exchange rates cause much wrath in Canada, and though I suspect that speculation may have much to do with augmenting the difference, there is something fundamental in our trade relations that makes a certain amount of adverse exchange inevitable at the present time. If this is not true,

then we loyal Canadians have much to answer for. If the Wall Street financiers are doing a grievous wrong to Canadians every time they discount a dollar, then how about us every time we discount a pound sterling and discount it more severely than our own dollar is discounted? The most loyal Canadian in dealing with the Mother Country takes advantage of adverse exchange. Does this mean disloyalty, hatred of Great Britain, and all greed and unkindness? Certainly not. No one thinks so for a moment. It is the result of international conditions. Then may not the attitude of the United States be governed by the same international conditions? Anyway, it can hardly be an avoidable policy, adopted maliciously and on purpose to humiliate and rob us, or we would not be adopting an avoidable, malicious policy of this kind against our Mother Country. One does not need to be deep in the mysteries of finance to realize this proposition. Either we are disloyal and rapacious toward Great Britain or the Americans not wholly

rapacious in exchange dealings with us. They are entitled to the benefit of a doubt. This question of exchange and the wickedness of the United States is much in the mouths of the supporters of the high tariff — so it is possible that their inability to see the truth of the situation is due more to selfish purpose than to lack of financial understanding.

In the case of the press I got an impression of opinion from an American who controls or influences a great amount of publicity. I called to see him to ask if something could not be done to allay the irritation and improve the situation. With cheerful cynicism he laid bare the real situation.

"To tell you the truth we are making the most of the irritation for party reasons. But the other party is just as bad as we are. I know it is rotten and even dangerous, but we are forced to do it if we want to get the floating vote."

Few men in public life are so candid, but he wanted to be friendly and to save me trou-

ble, and was talking as one public writer to another. I am thankful to him for his straightforwardness in the matter. Now let us turn to Canada.

There are few Canadians who have forgotten how the indiscreet utterances of Mr. Champ Clark and of President Taft were used to rouse the wrath of Canadians when "no truck or trade with the Yankees" was a slogan of power. The success of that slogan entrenched the protectionists. And now that every possible cause of irritation between the neighboring countries is being commented upon and aggravated, it does not seem out of place to suspect that further tinkering on that wall is to be undertaken as one of our fall chores. This indicates that back of the patriotic jealousy displayed on the platform and in the press there is a sinister purpose. Men who use politics to achieve their purpose do not hesitate to stir up racial strife — no matter what the ultimate consequences. As this line of conduct has crystallized in Canada in the

phrase "No truck or trade with the Yankees," the blame for playing with this evil fire rests on the party that benefits by the hatred provoked. They attain their ends by what a leader of the United Farmers of Ontario described as "the most criminal conduct possible to a public man."

For fear the reader may think I am holding a brief for free trade, I may as well state my personal position on that question also. I am not an out-and-out free trader. Though the theory of free trade satisfies my reason it is not supported by my experience. This is an imperfect world and free trade, like the single-tax, with which it is involved, is too perfect for our present state of development. It is rather a goal to be worked toward than a panacea to be applied suddenly. As I have long been of the opinion that almost every advance in history has been made through a benevolent opportunism, I believe in approaching the ultimate goal of free trade by steps, as opportunity affords. In consequence

I have no deep quarrel with the protectionist or high-tariff advocate on the score of the application of his political and economic principles. But there is a matter on which I have an unappeasable quarrel with him. When he bolsters up his tariff wall by appeals to racial hatred he is guilty of a treason to humanity that cannot be lightly condoned. At the present time, when all humanity is crying for peace, the cultivation of race hatred is especially criminal. So if it should be found that the irritation existing between Canada and the United States is due to the desire of the supporters of the high tariff, then let us have free trade "red in tooth and claw." Tariff wars lead to blood wars and surely we have had enough of them.

CHAPTER V

REGISTERING REFORM

POSSIBLY no one other thing has done so much to cause irritation between Canada and the United States as the film plays. As most of those used in Canada are manufactured in the United States, the jingoism they reveal arouses constant anger. During the war film plays were used as propaganda to arouse the American spirit and to awaken a pride in the achievements of American soldiers. Naturally these plays did not emphasize the heroism of the British and Canadians, and when exhibited in British territory, purely as a business venture, they did harm that no one stopped to compute. They earned money for their promoters and for the local movie houses, so what more need be considered? In the United States their political effect was admirable. They roused the war spirit of the people and stirred national pride. No one apparently took the

trouble to give a thought to how these propaganda films would look to the returned soldiers of Canada and to a people nerve-racked by war. They would earn additional money in Canada — so let them go. Listen to any Canadian who is expressing ill-feeling toward the United States, just now, and you will find that nine times out of ten the irritation can be traced back to the movies.

Wishing to learn if it would be possible to remedy this international evil I decided to go to the fountain-head of the trouble. A friendly publisher arranged to have me meet one of the master minds in a film-producing company of world-wide activities. The modern Prospero would see me at 3.30, in his office in one of "the cloud-capped towers." Knowing that I must shake off all philosophic languor for this interview I went at it as if I were going to make a running jump of a new kind. A mile away from my destination I climbed into a high-powered car (borrowed) and approached the great man's office at the speed

limit. An express elevator shot me up to the proper floor and I burst into the presence of the outer guard. By this time I had acquired the necessary momentum and, in reply to his swift, interrogatory glance, snapped out a card and "flashed."

"Mr. Swiftbrain — appointment — 3.30."

He grabbed a telephone, repeated my claim of an appointment, listened a moment, then waved me to an upholstered chair that looked rather better than the ones from the Kaiser's Throne Room that are now for sale in New York.

"I am to send you in in five minutes!"

I was glad of the respite, for it would enable me to recover my breath. Office boys who were in the waiting-room — ready to "Post o'er land and ocean without rest" in obedience to the autocrat of the switchboard — were so full of the jazz-time spirit of this temple of the movies that they could n't keep still. Even when resting, their feet beat time to some inaudibile, syncopated rhythm.

During my five minutes of probation much business was transacted. Trembling writers of scenarios entered, left their manuscripts, and passed out. Girls with handfuls of documents minced in and out passing from one department to another, and each carried herself with the air of a film queen. Hasty young men registering "urgent business" passed through with the air of a Douglas Fairbanks or Dustin Farnum. Their well-tailored coat-tails streamed back like the robes of Hyperion when

"His flaming robes streamed out beyond his heels
And gave a roar as if of earthly fire."

Suddenly I heard the snap of a gold watch-case and an authoritative arm shot out, pointing to the door through which the main traffic was passing.

"Down to the far end! Turn to the left!—Room Umpty-Umph!"

Rising as if from a catapult I fell in step behind a hasty edition of Fatty Arbuckle. When I reached the properly numbered door and

opened it, I was met by a man who knew my name and business. He registered "welcome" and waved me to a chair. I accepted the courtesy and registered "attention." He bounced back into his swivel chair and registered "candor." And he was astonishingly candid.

Movie plays are a purely business proposition. It made him sick to have people talk about ideals and art in connection with them. It was their business to give the public stories that would grip them and make them want to see the shows. If the people felt like hating any one or anything, give them plenty of hate stuff and play it up as long as it fills the houses. It is not their business to educate. They are practical business men, out after money.

He presently interrupted his monologue to answer the telephone, which had jingled at his elbow. I suspect that the interruption was part of the routine of the office. Anyway, I got my cue. He was to see his next visitor in five minutes. Resuming his monologue he impressed on me the fact that the one thing

the movie firms are after is stories that will grip the public and make them give up their money.

Then I got up and registered "gratitude" while he registered "Don't mention it." We did a close-up hand-shake and I passed through the door. Returning toward the front entrance I was quite in accord with the spirit of the place and pranced like a horse with the spring-halt.

That, I think, is a fair presentation of the spirit and atmosphere of the fountain-head of the movie shows that are pleasing the people of the United States and rousing the wrath of Canadians. Only by giving a touch of burlesque is it possible to indicate what is done or how it is done. Here we have the greatest moulder of public opinion in the world — infinitely more powerful than the press because it makes emotion visible — and yet it is without any purpose higher than the grasping of money. There is no George Brown, Delane, or Greeley to use this tremendous power for the

good of humanity. Sordid, exciting, without conscience, it is bad enough when devoted merely to money-making; but when used for purposes of propaganda it is a public menace. The dollars of the propagandist are just as good to the promoters of film plays as those of the public, and when one can get both it is a triumph. So, hurrah for the scenario that will get the support of the campaign fund, put across politics, either national or international, and at the same time win the nickels of the public. Get them going and coming! That is the motto! Never mind what the results may be — other than those that show in the box offices.

Of course these reflections are inspired by what I found in the United States. Now let me tell you something about Canada, where the movie business is in its infancy.

By a curious blunder I was invited to see a new film of which a private performance was to be given. It is seldom that I have ever seen anything so amazing as this movie show

proved to be. The story was highly emotional and was enough to rouse the wrath of any one against the aliens in the Dominion. The political propaganda stuck out like a sore thumb, and if I had swallowed its presentation of conditions in Canada, I would have been quite ready to vote for the War Times Election Act or anything else that would suppress every one who did not support Imperialism and a lot of "isms" not nearly so respectable. But I had been through the West and had first-hand knowledge of the facts that were distorted in this play. It merely aroused laughter. It was what political experts would call "coarse work," but perhaps the public will never see it in all the rawness of that first performance. I was assured that it was to be edited and amended. My investigations afterwards forced from a responsible representative of the high-tariff interests a frank admission that the play already had political backing and that the private view I had inadvertently seen had been put on for the benefit of a selected audience of

magnates and to get the support of the business interests.

These experiences have convinced me that irresponsible movie shows must be brought under control. It is not enough to have them censored so that immoral and pornographic plays may be kept from polluting the youth of the country. Some means must be found to make some one responsible — just as an editor or publisher is responsible — for the reckless political impressions they convey.

I am inclined to think that the part played by the movies in causing irritation between the United States and Allied countries is inadvertent. We all did jingo things to keep up our morale during the war. Such things were not harmful to other countries when confined within the borders of the countries using them, but the international character of American film enterprises has flaunted American jingoism in the face of the world — at a time when the world is not in the humor to endure it. It was not the intention to insult other

countries, but the films could earn additional money — and what did anything else matter? It will be necessary to correct this evil if we are to have harmonious relations with our neighbors. Moreover, propaganda plays for home consumption must be put in the same class as patent medicine advertisements in the newspapers, if we are to have a healthy public opinion. We must have them properly labelled, with the formula of their ingredients shown in an introductory flash.

CHAPTER VI

THE ACCUSED

BUT neither the press, the movies, nor the exchange account fully for the attitude of the Allies toward the United States. The chief accusation against Americans at the present time is of callous selfishness. They have deserted the great cause of humanity to accumulate profits and play petty politics. Have it that way if you wish. Say your worst and prove it and you will accomplish nothing. Neither would anything be accomplished if the United States agreed to all of which she is accused and roused herself to do what her critics regard as her duty. The solution of the world's problems does not lie within the sphere of governments, and can neither be aided nor hindered by laws or covenants that statesmen and rulers can devise. The United States is now in practically the same position as the devastated nations of Europe. In spite

of her swollen wealth her future depends on the conduct of her citizens rather than on the collective wisdom of political parties, governments or business interests. The earth hold of humanity has been broken by the war, no less in the United States and Canada than in the old world. Unless men and women return voluntarily to productive work, this glittering, unreal wealth will prove to be but gaudy trappings covering hunger and poverty. While we are concerning ourselves with world problems, the problems of food, clothing, and shelter are being despised as unworthy of our attention. We are increasing our stores of money while the supply of necessary things that money can buy is steadily diminishing. We are bringing nations to trial, the United States as well as Germany, in a courtroom that threatens to tumble about our heads. We are clamoring for justice but justice is impossible.

There is one great lesson, above all others, that has been taught by this war and that few have learned. Surely we should be able

to see by now the futility of human justice. If those who have been affected by this war could live forever and the best human judgment could be exercised throughout eternity, we could not render justice to those who sinned or to those who suffered. The healing of the world does not wait on justice.

May one without irreverence go back to the birth of Christianity? At that time the world was groaning under the administration of Roman justice. Mosaic justice was also playing its part.

It is reasonably clear that the appeal of the new dispensation was strengthened by the inevitable reaction from the oppressions of justice. The Mosaic and Roman systems were the most marvellous ever devised, but tormented humanity cried aloud against them.

"The soul of man, like an unextinguished fire,
Yet burns towards Heaven with fierce reproach,
and doubt,
And lamentation, and reluctant prayer,
Hurling up insurrection."

Out of that bitterness was born the one thought that has been of value to the human race. The amazing, divine discovery was made that forgiveness is better than justice and that only through kindness and brotherhood can life endure. That one flash of light has been the guiding star of all the great souls that have struggled and sacrificed themselves to lead the world to better things in the past two thousand years. But since the dawn of history men have been striving for that form of vengeance they call justice. And the most pathetic aspect of the present crisis is that we are harking back to the primitive and demanding justice on a scale never attempted before. We would even weigh nations in the scales of justice, though we have no adequate balance and no counterpoise.

Of course it would never do to ask an indignant and outraged world to forgive a Germany that has tried to destroy the hope of man. Very well. It does not matter whether you forgive or whether you punish. Though

you forgive her, she will not be forgiven. Forgiveness will not save her from the disaster she has brought on herself no less than on others. And you cannot punish her without danger of further disasters. The whole matter — the Kaiser as well as the nations — has passed out of our hands to be dealt with by the awful compensations of higher laws than those that man can administer. And as for us — for all of us — we must face the future as individuals rather than as nations. In the terrible words of General Smuts, "Humanity has struck its tents and is once more on the march." And when humanity marched in the past it always marched for food — for lands of promise flowing with milk and honey. But the lands of promise have all been discovered. They have been mapped and are occupied. So the only thing left for humanity to do is to pitch its tents again — or lapse into anarchy. While I would not pretend to defend the United States for its present isolation and apparent indifference when so many of my compatriots — and

those the ones supposed to speak with authority — are pointing the finger of scorn, I have a feeling that under this apparent indifference there is a blind, instinctive groping for the true solution of humanity's problem. I found the best people perplexed rather than defiant. They were raging at their own futility — futile because they could not yet see through the battle-smoke that still envelops the world. And I am hopeful that before long they will fulfil Kipling's estimate:

> "While reproof around him rings
> He turns a keen untroubled face
> Home, to the instant need of things."

The charge is brought against them that they are without spiritual insight. I would give this accusation more weight if I had more respect for the spiritual pretensions of others. No man and no nation need lay claim to spiritual insight while clamoring for justice. The dispensation under which we are supposed to live is the dispensation of forgiveness and helpfulness. We profess the Golden Rule and

yet demand an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. Could anything be more pathetically absurd? If the world were not so wounded and stricken one might be moved to inextinguishable laughter by the pompous inanities of men who would administer God's justice in a world that has been brought to its present pitiful state by organized greed. The over-organization of humanity for profit made the Great Catastrophe inevitable and our cure for it is more and greater organizations. But "God is not mocked." When man established democracy it was implied that every citizen would prove capable of self-government, would do his full share of the work of the world. And now the safety of democracy depends, not on governments or on leagues of government, but on the willingness and ability of each citizen to do his part. In the past we went woefully astray. The ambition of every strong man was to accumulate wealth and leave behind him a family that would be freed from the need of performing the work of true citizens —

that would live parasitically on the proceeds of claims on production which he established and for which he secured legal sanction. Instead of great democracies of citizens each doing their part, we developed organized, ruthless autocracies of industrialism and finance that made bloodless war on each other and established a social parasitism that amazed the world with its luxury and extravagance. But the hour of testing has come. Unless the great democracies of the West, the United States and Canada, can justify the gospel of freedom and equality they have been flaunting before the world, their fate will be quickly sealed. But if they can clothe their professions in deeds, and every citizen by his actions can show himself worthy to be a citizen of a true democracy, they will give the world the leadership it so sorely needs. To do this they must banish the old, hard fetish of justice — or if they must have justice let them render it, not demand it. If they take the true path it will matter little what happens

to the wealth to which they have been devoted.

Indeed, nothing could be more disastrous to mankind than that the present swollen war wealth which is so evident and insulting in all the capitals of the world should become fixed and permanent. The establishment of this reckless wealth on a stable basis would justify the intolerable conviction that war is profitable and there would be no end to wars. The most wisely devised League of Nations could not prevent their recurrence. They would be more likely to increase than to disappear.

Let no one say that this would mean anarchy and the destruction of our social order. It would simply mean a return to the austere virtues of our fathers, under the law and order which our fathers established. Let it not be forgotten that generations of men and women have sacrificed themselves on the altar of humanity so that freedom might be made sure in his new world. With incredible labor that found its reward in the building of homes

rather than in dollars they cleared away the forests and made the wilderness blossom. No one who believes in the God of nations can believe that so much high aspiration and generous effort can go down to defeat. In spite of misunderstandings, irritations, and the selfish, petty intrigues of politicians, the hope of humanity still lies with the democracies of the West. They bought their freedom at a great price, and, in spite of mistakes and follies, that freedom, and the example of their fathers, will point to them the path of duty.

CHAPTER VII

A BURDEN OF FARMERS

ONE interested hour was spent in the office of a captain of industry who attended to urgent work while I read a morning paper and awaited his leisure. As the nature of his business was largely Greek to me I could be allowed to overhear; but I was really more interested in the methods than in the matter of his transactions. The pressure of a button would bring an office boy, a secretary, or a salesman to his side, according to the needs of the moment. While he was going through his mail telegrams were delivered to him and the telephone jingled at his elbow. He dictated letters, talked over the telephone, and answered telegrams — even cablegrams — without leaving his desk. He not only talked to other business men in the city, but answered long-distance calls from other cities and

ordered long-distance calls. If his activities could be traced in red lines on a map, they would resemble the charts of the nervous system I saw a few days ago when going through an Institute of Anatomy. His office was a ganglion of the modern business organism.

Listening idly to the multitude of orders that were issued I noticed presently that something was wrong. Though orders were placed and information received as through a sensitive system of nerves, the orders were being held up. There were outlaw strikes on the railways — and freight was not being moved. Stevedore unions were not only refusing to handle certain products of the company because they were packed in bags and were too dusty and messy for highly paid, well-dressed stevedores to handle, but they refused to let the employees of the company handle the stuff because they were not members of the union. That sounds absurdly unreasonable, but it is a recorded fact.

Keeping up the simile of business as a living

organism, I think this would be regarded as symptomatic of a pathological condition of the circulatory system — to be technical, it might be described as arterio-sclerosis, or hardening of the arteries. A very deadly disease, and if the cities are beginning to suffer from it, the outlook is serious.

Now let us essay a burden of great cities.

It would be a safe thing to prophesy the downfall of New York, Boston, Philadelphia — of all the capitals of the world. Isaiah and the old prophets were discreet in prophesying against cities, for given enough time their prophecies were bound to be fulfilled.

"Of Ur and Erech and Accad who shall tell?
And Calneh in the land of Shinar? Time
Hath made them but the substance of a rhyme."

To continue borrowing from Archibald Lampman, where now are

"Memphis and Shushan, Carthage, Meroë"?

They have passed and are merely

"A sound of ancientness and majesty."

The list of dead cities that were once the capitals of empires is as long as the dusty tale of archæology. All have gone down and all must go. As it would not be considered sporting to prophesy a sure thing we shall leave the cities to their inevitable destiny. If one cared to examine into the matter it would be found that a day of wrath is approaching for them, and if there be a sure foundation for the law of the acceleration of civilization which has been announced recently the day is not far off. Indeed, it might be shown that all civilization is rapidly approaching a precipice, but every one is hopeful that Dr. Einstein or some equally profound philosopher will trammel the law of gravity so that we shall fall over the precipice slowly and land softly.

But enough of cities. The urgent need of to-day is for some one to prophesy against the farmers. The ultimate fate of civilization rests with them — and they are bowing down to the old gods of politics and power.

Let us consider their case.

In the modern farmer, free, educated, prosperous, we have the one new thing under the sun: something for which history has no precedent. The old cities and civilizations were all fed, supported, and enriched by the slave populations that worked the land, dug the mines, and did every kind of productive work. And when the cities went down the country perished also. But thanks to the ideals of our fathers, the farmers and laborers of to-day are educated like the free citizens of the ancient cities. If we had continued true to the ideals of our fathers, we should all have self-supporting homes of our own. But we must build cities, organize for profit, and live luxuriously.

Mark what has happened. Capital was accumulated in the cities. Capital gradually organized business and established it in the great centres. When business was centralized, labor was centralized and began to organize. Now capital and labor are at each other's throats and likely to prove themselves the substance of Shelley's symbols.

"We two will sink on the wide waves of ruin
Even as a vulture and a snake outspent
Drop, twisted in inextricable fight,
Into a shoreless sea."

At the present time the farmers are the sole inheritors of the ideals of our fathers. But like the foolish men of the cities they are also organizing for profit. They have forgotten that the home was the one great ideal of the men and women who braved the perils of the ocean and conquered the wilderness. Farming is above all a home-building occupation — rather than a money-making business. But now men no longer regard the place where they live as a home. It is merely a speculation in real estate. They try to estimate everything in terms of dollars — and the money profits are so meagre that all who are able are deserting the farms and joining in the great jazz-time dollar dance of the cities. The farmers are forsaking the substance for the glitter — or are organizing for political power so that they may divert the stream of dollars toward the farms. Of course

it can be shown that under modern conditions there can be no home without money. But why trouble about modern conditions? The world is very old and has developed many great men and all that we know of good without the aid of modern conditions. Few of the poets and prophets and great leaders of the past were born in the cities. "Modern conditions" — luxury, extravagance, dissipation, and parasitism — undoubtedly encompassed the destruction of all the great cities whose names move sonorously in verse. And now the farmers are lusting for the "modern conditions" that are hurrying the cities to destruction.

Now that the farmers are educated and "profess apprehension," why do they not read the great portents of our time? Can they not see that some cosmic pendulum that measures the progress of man toward his destiny has started on its backward swing? All the great symbols and allegories by which we have been taught in the past are now being reversed.

After the Deluge men built the Tower of Babel so that they might not be destroyed. And for their presumption they were scattered by a confusion of tongues.

After the Great War — a man-made disaster as terrible as the Flood — we are having all the confused tongues of ancient Babel uniting in a cry that men must come together to make the world safe for democracy. What was scattered is reassembling.

We are told that in the beginning man was placed in a garden — on the land — but for his disobedience he was driven forth by cherubim with a flaming sword.

He built himself cities as places of refuge from the savage creatures and enemies of the country. But the cities betrayed his trust. They became great and terrible until now those who are disillusioned of "modern conditions" are turning toward the country as a refuge from the cities. The procedure has been reversed and all who have vision can see that a day will come — a day of hunger and

fear — when man will be driven back to his garden by cherubim with a flaming sword.

But this is the old-time prophecy of woes to come — and pessimism is not popular. Let us return to everyday life and see what we can find of hope. At the risk of an anticlimax I shall venture to deal with what will seem but little things after your thoughts have been dealing with what we have ignorantly regarded as great things. Let us consider one little thing — that is the greatest thing in the world. Let us give a thought to the home.

While visiting the great cities I have visited in homes, and in the thing most complained of I have found the first ray of hope. There are no longer any servants for families of moderate means. The work of the home must be done by those who enjoy the home. Because of this there is a fuller and freer home life. Women of education and culture who have been compelled by the high cost of living to do their own work are doing it better than it was ever done by servants. They are better cooks than the

cooks they had in the past, and all the members of the family are of necessity learning lessons of helpfulness. If the death-struggle of labor and capital should paralyze, or at least decentralize, civilization, we have an atavistic capacity to do our own work. Our forefathers did their own work and we look back to them proudly as being better than we are. The cities are full of men and women who were born on the farms and know how to do the work of farms, and when the truth of Job's words is brought home to them — "as for bread, it cometh from the earth" — they can go back to the earth with confidence. The true mission of the educated, thinking farmer today is to use his newly acquired power to preserve the new experiment in civilization tried by our fathers and which made the home rather than money the unit of success. Let them coöperate to establish their own homes and to help others to establish self-supporting homes and we shall have a more glorious civilization than has been. If we return to the

vision and hope of those who established the democracies of the new world, the cherubim with the flaming sword may prove to be heralds, whose sword will be miraculously changed into a torch lighting us to a better world. But this change will be wrought, not by statesmen, but by men and women worthy to be citizens of a democracy — men and women who are not ashamed to do little things and do them well. And we are taught not to "despise the day of little things."

CHAPTER VIII

A WORLD DRAMA

WHILE travelling from New York to Philadelphia I saw men at work in the fields for the first time in two weeks. I had been enjoying the great drama of business in one of the greatest cities of the world. But the sight of men at work in the fields suddenly reminded me that while walking the streets I was missing the annual production of "crops" — a drama as old as Time, that will run until the end of Time. As the significance of what was in progress dawned on me and gripped my imagination, I was puzzled to decide whether I should review this play as a tragedy or as a roaring farce. From one point of view it is pitiful to the point of tears; from another, it is broadly comic. Before deciding what treatment it shall be given, let us analyze the plot of the wonderful performance that will hold a

world-wide stage through the spring, summer, and autumn. If we give it our undivided attention we shall find that it covers every form of human activity, and reveals in rapid action all the possibilities of human nature. It is the one play in all the world that deserves to be introduced by the greatest prologue ever written.

"O for a Muse of fire, that would ascend
The brightest heaven of invention,
A kingdom for a stage, princes to act,
And monarchs to behold the swelling scene."

Having suggested the magnitude of the performance, I shall ask you to mark the performance, either in the theatre of your imagination, or by going out into the fields where it will be enacted; I am going to ask you to

"Admit me Chorus to this history:
Who, prologue-like, your humble patience pray
Gently to hear, kindly to judge, our play."

Once more the food of the world is to be produced. Working in accord with nature, man will sow seed, prune his trees, trim his vines, tend his herds and flocks, and bow his shoul-

ders to the burden of toil, so that the world may be fed. To guide him in his work he draws on the long experience of the race and the enlightenment of modern science; to aid him he calls for the best tools and machinery that the brain can devise. As soon as the farmer drives his team to the field he stimulates activity in the colleges and laboratories and in all the mines and factories. Those who labor in the cities may go on with their work, for there will be food to pay for their products. But there is something more. Besides renewing the food supply of the world — the most necessary work of all, for we are never more than a few months away from the hunger line — the men who work in the fields will re-create the wealth of the world. Without being renewed by the interest and profits to be derived from the crops, Capital, that bulks so large and is often so insolent, would dwindle and disappear. Financiers, Manufacturers, Promoters, and Captains of Industry depend on the crops — on the labor of the men in the fields — as

much as any one else. They devise their great schemes, launch their projects, and undertake their enterprises solely with a view to getting a share of the new wealth that will be taken from the fields and perfected by labor. The crops and the wages of the laboring men will pay debts contracted for necessities and luxuries, and pay the interest on borrowed money. The financial machinery of the world can work smoothly, for there will be a flood of new wealth when the crops are harvested. If the crops failed, or if the farmers refused to produce, the cities would be wiped out and the social fabric would crumble. The Government would be without revenues. If debts and interest were not paid, dividends on stocks and bonds would cease and the capitalist would be reduced to beggary. Without the yearly work of the farmers our magnificent civilization would relapse to barbarism and our great world drama would become a mad scramble of savages. From this point of view the farmer's part is entirely heroic. He is the demi-

Atlas of the world, the "arm and bourgonet of men." In our great drama, introduced by bird song and lighted by the spring sunshine, he is surely cast for the title rôle. Alas, the pity of it! He has been too often merely the drudge — the serf who provided the luxuries of his over-lords.

Watch the drama while it unfolds. For weary months the men who are struggling with nature toil early and late, pit their skill against all the forces that oppose them, endure the droughts and storms and struggle against all the chances that might defeat them in producing the world's food. They are too busy to watch the drama. Often they are too busy for thought. All of them have hopes that may be fulfilled if the crops are good — little hopes compared with those of the men who are waiting in the wings for their cues. If things turn out well they may be able to put by something for the future, enjoy an excursion out into the amazing world, indulge in some coveted luxury or improve their homes and farms. But most

of them will have to be satisfied with ordinary food, shelter, and clothing — just sufficient to carry them and their families through the winter until the great drama is staged again. But before they are sure of anything they must gather in their harvest and market it. Now begins the joyous comedy — the uproarious fun. The banks provide the counters — money — for "moving the crops." Loans are repaid to them with interest, and they thrive. Transportation companies, almost all built by the money of the people, though not owned by them, move the crops — and there is a golden stream of dividends. Middlemen, as "efficient" as pickpockets, handle the food of the world over and over, and at every turn profits are made. But it would be impossible in a brief review to trace the food from the farm to the table of that other poor dupe, the city laboring man. It reaches his table finally at famine prices. His food is assured and the great comedy of life can proceed. The profit gatherers, who work with the villain of the

piece, Uncontrolled Capital, have their wealth as well as their food supply renewed, and they can revel and riot. All the arts flourish and the cities grow proud. The world is safe for another year, and then the performance will be repeated as it has been since the world began.

As this play is of human origin, developed in disobedience to many divine commands, I have no hesitation in suggesting a few improvements. As given at present, Capital has all the fat parts, and the men who do the real work are crowded off the stage. The vast majority are cast for "thinking parts," and are kept so busy that they have neither the time nor the energy to think. But some day they may think enough to discover that the leading actor, Capital, depends on them, instead of having them depend on him and his high-toned crowd. They may discover that Coöperation will give them all the assistance they need and that Capital can be made a servant instead of master. They may realize that the men who make the wealth of the

world deserve a fair share of it. Coöperation will do away with the profits, interest, and dividends that now go to re-create every year the predatory Capital that supports social parasites. Wealth will not be divided, as some Utopians have dreamed, but the men who create wealth will be given the right to hold their fair share of it. When the play is properly rewritten, the men who do the work of food distribution and the distribution of all necessaries — and luxuries, for that matter — will be the servants of the people rather than their millionaire masters. A coöperating people will be more powerful than any corporation, and can employ the brains that are now being employed by capitalists who exploit them. And the task of rewriting the play will not be done by a political party elected on that platform. It will be done by the workers themselves. Any discerning critic can tell you that there is more economic progress in the formation of an egg-circle than can be won at a general election. The people are crushed at the

present time, not because the Big Interests are so well organized, but because the people are not organized at all. The watchword of to-day is "Coöperate!" That is the slogan of universal brotherhood and of a new civilization that we can all enjoy. Every new organization of producers or consumers is a step forward and a blow to Capitalism. Every step they are making in the way of politics is usually a mistake — that tends to place them in the power of men more adroit than they can ever hope to be. When the actors in our play get to work and rewrite it, it will be a great and stimulating drama worth seeing. It will be robbed both of its tragical and farcical aspects and given a serene beauty. Organize the industry in which you are engaged and you will be rewriting your own lines in the great drama of life and making the situations in which you take part more dignified and satisfying. It is a glorious drama and one worth acting a part in, if all the people would see to it that they get their fair share of the

fat lines and cut out the bombastic speeches of Uncontrolled Capital. Why not start to rewrite your lines to-day? When enough small organizations have been formed in which the members will coöperate, for their own good and for the good of all, it will be easy to reorganize our whole social system. An egg-circle, a beef-ring, a fruit-growers' association, a farmers' club, or a labor union will do as well as anything else. Organize for coöperation, and the baneful influences of both Capitalism and Partisan Politics will disappear. Organize for political action and you will be just where you were when you started. We must have politics, for we must have governments, but when governments act as umpires rather than as rulers in a coöperating world, politics will become a help to the world instead of a menace. Let us follow the advice of our heavy financial and industrial leaders and take business out of politics, but let us first coöperate to make the business our own. And now is the time to begin.

CHAPTER IX

A WORLD FOR SALE

ALTHOUGH I did not keep account of the matter, I have no hesitation in saying that in my travelling I have met more dealers in real estate than of any other class of men. One sat with me in the train between Hamilton and Toronto and dwelt on the advantages of real-estate investments in the Mountain City. Even foreign laborers who are unable to speak English are making thousands in real estate. In the observation car, travelling from Montreal to Boston, one of my fellow-passengers was an international real-estate agent. He had opened subdivisions in Seattle, Winnipeg, London, Montreal, and Brooklyn. He was one of the most optimistic men I have ever met. He could see possibilities even in the swamps that we passed and in the rocky slopes of New Hampshire and Vermont that were

revealed through the car windows. I suspect that he would not hesitate to open a subdivision on the planet Mars, with a frontage on the leading canal, if he could get an astronomer to furnish him with a map and blue-prints. If he should decide to do this he would have no trouble selling corner lots, for the country is full of men and women who buy real estate on maps.

In New York I found friends debating whether to sell the homes they had established, by thrift and industry, so that they could take advantage of boom prices.

In Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, and Winnipeg it had been the same. Not only city properties, but farm lands were for sale everywhere. The friends I visited were all dealing in real estate on the side — no matter what their professions might be. This preoccupation led to some amusing consequences, and I have a happy recollection of one joyous half-hour in a mining town in British Columbia. I had been visiting a great smelter in the company

of an engineer who dealt in real estate on the side.

As we were leaving the smelter he introduced me to the smoke expert of the institution. That sounds innocent enough, for, like me, you probably do not know what a "smoke expert" is. I asked for explanations, and right there the trouble began. I found that the "smoke expert" is really a botanical pathologist, whose business it is to show that smelter smoke does not cause all the damage that afflicts the crops of farmers and orchardists within a radius of fifty miles. As the real-estate agent had been telling me that British Columbia is entirely free from all bugs, blights, and pests, my interest was aroused at once.

"Do you mean to tell me that there really are blights and destructive fungi in this province?" I asked incredulously.

The "smoke expert" made a gesture of despair.

"The place is simply full of them."

"Come on! Don't listen to him!" yelled the real-estate man, recognizing the mistake he had made. "He's the damnedest liar in British Columbia."

"Wait a minute," I replied. "I want to know. That is what I am here for. Now, tell me please, please, what orchard pests there are?"

"Well, there are no coddling worms —"

"You'll admit that because no one ever sued the smelter for putting coddling worms in apples. Come along! Don't listen to him!"

"But there is fire-blight on pears —"

"That's a damned lie! I have a whole orchard of pears and there has never been a trace of fire-blight. Any fire-blight in this district has been caused by the smoke from your blithering smelter."

"But," I reproached him, "if something like fire-blight is caused by smelter smoke, is n't that just as bad as fire-blight? You did n't say anything to me about smelter smoke."

"It does n't do any damage either — at least not much."

"But the farmers have been suing us," said the smoke expert. "Of course they had no reason to sue us because the damage was clearly done by fire-blight."

"Nothing of the kind! And, anyway, the prevailing wind carries the smelter smoke over the mountains where there are no orchards or farms. Aw, come along, and don't listen to him!"

The "smoke expert" smiled sadly and shook his head with gentle tolerance. Finding in me the first sympathetic listener he had had for years he persisted in making revelations.

"Last fall I found an interesting case of 'withered plum' —"

"You could n't convince the jury that it was a fungous growth that affected those plums."

"No, for they did n't want to be convinced. They wanted to soak us. Then there was that 'clover sickness.'"

Seeing that he could n't stop what he had started, the disgusted real-estate agent collapsed into a chair while I had an illuminating chat with the "smoke expert." Occasionally he interrupted with a vivid protest, but he could n't quench my thirst for knowledge, or the expert's desire to impart scientific information.

"Let me tell you what the fellows did!" he at last exclaimed triumphantly. "They took some healthy leaves and sprinkled them with sulphuric acid. This expert diagnosed it as shot-hole fungus — a kind that he had been looking for for years — a kind they have in Australia —"

"You're another!" said the expert. "There is real shot-hole fungus here!"

So the battle raged, but I shall not report it further. Juries of farmers have invariably decided against the learned and patient "smoke expert," and I have no desire to give the province a bad reputation as to blights and pests. I saw no evidences of them on either fruit or

trees — but I'll wager that that real-estate agent will never again introduce his friend the "smoke expert" to a sympathetic and inquisitive visitor.

So it was wherever I went. So it was at home in the country. Real estate is being traded in everywhere.

A few months ago a writer in the "Toronto Globe" stated that Western Ontario is for sale. About the same time a writer in the "Saturday Evening Post" showed that the American corn belt is all for sale. People everywhere are ready to sell at a profit and move on.

The result of all this was to fix in my mind the conviction that the world is for sale.

One morning I awoke — or was I awake? — and found the world marvellously astir. A huge red flag hung down from the zenith and a jovial auctioneer with the moon for an auction block was about to offer the world for sale. Satan had foreclosed his mortgage, and Chaos, "The Anarch Old," was looking over

the property as a prospective buyer. The Soul of Man, troubled and confused, was also in the market for the world and wondering if the only price he could offer — a list of irksome virtues — could possibly outweigh the alluring, shadowy, jazz-time pleasures that his opponent would flash before the nations.

Bringing down his gavel with a crash that arrested the attention of the universe, the auctioneer began his harangue.

"Look it over, gentlemen, look it over! Here is the greatest bargain ever offered for sale — a perfect prize package of a planet. It has been in existence a long time and all its possibilities are known. It is a perfect location for either a heaven or a hell, and has all the natural resources needed to make it one or the other. Its history shows the attempts that have been made in both directions. Let me recount them briefly. First, O Chaos, let me address myself to you.

"This world has just had a fiercer war than any one thought it was possible for man to

wage. Millions have been slaughtered, millions have been wounded and crippled, millions have been starved to death, millions have been wasted by disease. The wonderful baying of the hell-hounds of war has been stilled, but a word would unleash the pack and they would harry man through air and earth and sea. Famine and Pestilence are feeding fat on the nations, and Lust, Greed, and Hate are revelling in all the capitals. To any one wanting to start a private hell for his own amusement this is the greatest bargain ever offered. The work of building is almost complete. All that is needed is a little imagination and a consignment of sulphur. It is not ever necessary to provide a match. The world is full of fools, both high and low, who are only waiting for a chance to apply the match. Take my word for it, O Chaos, you will never again have such a chance to start a summer resort of your own, so consider well the price that you are willing to pay."

Turning to the Soul of Man, who had been

reduced almost to despair by this horrid recital, the face of the auctioneer glowed like the sun, and with a voice as musical as summer winds in the elms he whispered:

"O Soul of Man, why art thou troubled? My words were but words of scorn and reproof. Behold now this world with the eyes of faith. Look at the fertile fields, flooded with sunshine — the rain-bearing clouds and the mystery of growth. Mark the little homes that dot the plains and cling to the wooded hills. Hear the laughter of children and the song of birds. Even the war was rich with deeds of heroic sacrifice. Charity, Mercy, and Science are striving to overtake Famine and Pestilence. Brotherhood waits for leadership. Truly there is here the matter for a new earth that will be a new heaven. Consider well the price that you are willing to pay."

Lifting up his voice till the universe rang with it, the auctioneer shouted:

"The sale is now on! What am I bid for this pendulous planet that swings forever from the

throne of the sun? There is no reserve bid. The sale must be concluded to-day. What am I bid?"

"Wealth!" shouted Chaos. "Gold, silver, paper, unlimited credit!"

The nations roared applause.

"Contentment," offered the Soul of Man quietly.

The nations jeered.

Then the two bidders made alternate offers. Chaos began:

"Palaces!"

"Homes."

"Power!"

"Brotherhood."

"Idleness!"

"Industry."

"Extravagance!"

"Thrift."

"License!"

"Order."

While the bidding proceeded, tumult broke out among the nations. Some favored one

bidder; some the other. As the tumult grew, the War God, who always walks before Chaos, tossed his plumed helmet and marshalled all his enginery. Once more his sword was to reap its harvest.

"The Eternal, to prevent such horrid fray,
Hung forth in heaven his golden scales, yet seen
Betwixt Astrea and the Scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
. . . In these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up-flew, and kicked the beam;
. . . The fiend looked up and knew
His mounted scale above; no more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night."

The great auctioneer brought down his gavel.

"Sold to the Soul of Man, for a price that he can well afford to pay!"

Then I was awake, indeed, and as I looked about me I saw the fields flooded with sunshine, felt the caress of the summer breeze,

and heard the song of birds. The children were shouting at their play — and the home was my home.

My brothers, we have a good bargain!

CHAPTER X

ORGANIZED FOR PROFIT

WITH a couple of chance acquaintances I was discussing everyday activities as reported in the daily papers. A quiet man with a poker face was listening to our talk. Suddenly he contributed a remark:

"This country is going to hell for lack of leadership."

That sounded familiar. It occurred to me that I had heard the remark before. I had heard it even in Canada. Shortly afterwards I learned that the man who had made the remark was a millionaire. Consequently his pontifical utterance did not surprise me. Monied men really feel deeply on the matter—but they expect some one else to give the leadership they so earnestly want. If you listen to their talk you will find that they give about every reason for the lack but the true one.

The people lack leadership because they are not candid about where they want to go. There is a lot of talk about social justice, but justice is about the last thing that many people want. In fact, they seem to be afraid that they are going to get it. During the war, when the soldiers were fighting, dying, and passing through hell generally, those who stayed at home enjoyed a prosperity that never was known before. Capital made such profits as never were known before; Labor got such wages as never were known before; farmers, miners, fishermen, lumbermen — men of all classes enjoyed such prosperity as never was known before. And now they are clamoring for leaders who will enable them to keep the blood-bought riches and profits and the wages they got in the world's time of anguish. They are horrified to find that the bloated, unhealthy profits of war are losing their value through the operation of laws of compensation more inexorable than any ever devised by man. Although the Great War revealed

the heroism and spirit of self-sacrifice in many, it aroused the selfishness of still more. That manufacturer blurted out a very prevalent conviction when he said, "Any man who did n't make money during the war must have had something wrong with him." And now these people are clamoring for leaders who will protect them in their selfishness. They want to be led into a beatific era, where each will get more than his share of the good things of life. It is a mistake to think that the big profiteers are the only ones who are to blame for existing conditions. There are shoals and swarms of little profiteers who are just as selfish and rapacious as the big ones. All they lack is capacity and opportunity, like the little devils described by Kipling. They

> "Weep that they bin
> Too small to sin
> To the height of their desire."

Humanity will look in vain for true leadership until it is cleansed of its selfishness.

There are many who are suffering through



no fault of their own — many who gave, toiled, and sacrificed so that freedom might endure, but they are not the ones whose voices are the loudest to-day. They believed that an era of justice and brotherly love would follow victory. To-day they are bewildered and stunned to find that their sacrifices were apparently made in vain. Many of the returned soldiers with whom I have talked are as homesick as they were in France for the conditions they left behind four or five years ago. This home land of insolent wealth and noisy grumblings — of strife and turmoil — is not the land for whose freedom they fought. They find it hard to realize that while they were offering their lives to save the world, the world went money-mad. Can they be blamed if they are touched with discouragement and disgust?

At the present time there is much in the papers about the reëducation of soldiers to fit them for a place in civil life. Here is another case where we are in danger of making a griev-

ous mistake. There is need of reëducation, of course, but the soldiers are not the only ones who need to be reëducated. The present idea seems to be that the soldiers must be reëducated so as to enable them to follow some occupation in our social organization as it now stands. That will not do, my masters! It is not good enough! The military training these men have had educated them to sacrifice everything for the good of humanity — for the protection of their wives and families and for our protection. Now we propose to reëducate them so that they may try to compete with us in a struggle for existence that taxes the strength and resourcefulness of those whose strength is unwounded and who have made no sacrifices. Just think about it for a minute. What chance would our reëducated soldiers have against men who are already over-educated along these lines, and whose careers have not been interrupted by the need of making sacrifices for their country? Practically none, and it will be a poor reward to offer them for

what they have done, and are doing, to push them into such an unequal struggle.

Every day it is becoming more apparent that the world cannot go on as it was. Unless we rid ourselves of some of our selfishness, we shall be forced to face more grievous problems than we are facing just now. The soldier element in our population and in the population of the world will be too great to be absorbed readily into an unchanged civil life. Our old god, Profits, will be dethroned, no matter how devotedly we worship him. The menace of a food shortage is making many people think more clearly than ever before, and with the possibility of world-hunger before us Prudhon's assertion that "profit is theft" does not look nearly so anarchistic as it did. We see that every man should be rewarded for his services, but the thought that any man should make profits when all are struggling to bear up under accumulated burdens is already beginning to provoke rage. We admit every man's right to make a living, but doubt his right to

make a fortune. Our reëducation has begun, and we must see to it that it goes through properly. We must learn that success should depend on public service rather than on private greed. Not until we have learned that can we expect our soldiers to reënter civil life, and submit to its workaday burdens. And there will be no place in a reëducated world for parasites or people who will expect to live through a claim on the services of others. Though the subject is serious enough, one of Edward Lear's mocking limericks pops into my head as a symbolical description of the new state of affairs that seems inevitable:

"There was an old man who said, 'Well!
Will nobody answer this bell?
I have pulled day and night
Till my hair was grown white.
But nobody answers this bell.'"

I am afraid that the people who expect to get their living simply by ringing a bell will do more than get white hair.

CHAPTER XI

A MAJORITY WILL BE SAVED

ONE hates to have anything to do with the promulgation of a new law, especially when temperamentally in accord with the poet Carman who

> "Could always be at home
> Just beyond the reach of rule."

But the new law is already in existence, and as all I propose to do is modestly to discover its operations, I feel less compunction in the matter. But before making the announcement it is necessary to clear the ground by calling attention to another law that is apparently producing the chaotic conditions that are causing so much alarm at the present time. Then the new law may be offered as a balm that is to cure existing evils. Having reassured the mind of the reader we may now proceed.

Somewhere in his voluminous writings Karl Marx makes the arresting statement that "all capitalistic organizations carry within themselves the elements of their own destruction." (Solomon said long before Marx, "The prosperity of fools shall destroy them.") It might be demonstrated that the destroying element is "greed" for wealth and power, but it is enough to call attention to the fact that the work of destruction is at present in progress. Every morning our newspapers are calling attention to the fact that political parties are destroying themselves through lust for power and because they are dominated by the forces of organized Greed.

Capital is at present in a parlous condition because it is suspected of greedy profiteering and the plain people are in the mood to bring it to book.

Labor, that was enabled to organize because of the work done by Capital in centralizing industry for the purpose of increasing profits, is in danger of destroying itself by its

exactions, by general strikes, and by making labor conditions in the cities so remunerative and attractive that no one wants to stay on the farms to do the necessary but heavy and mussy work of food production.

There are even those who point out that the churches are destroying their usefulness by a rage for over-organization and financial stability, but that is a question that no cautious man would care to review.

Now the cities, those organized centres of humanity, appear to be passionately intent on committing suicide. In this they are receiving material aid from governments, but it seems useless for any one to offer a protest. When a delegation of farmers recently waited on Governor Smith, of New York, to protest against the adoption of daylight saving legislation, he rebuked them severely for their class selfishness. No one seems to realize that daylight saving is simply a gesture in the progress of city suicide. The few laborers to be found on the farms naturally want to take advantage

of the daylight saving law, with the result that they are idle in the morning hours when the dew makes impracticable the cultivation of root crops, corn, etc., and the gathering of hay and sheaves. And besides being idle at the expense of the farmers in the morning, they are idle for their own enjoyment in the late afternoon and evening when field work can be attended to most satisfactorily. Besides, the farmer is obliged to do his own milking and chores while his highly paid hired man goes to town to enjoy the movies. The result is that farmers are forced to limit their enterprises to the amount of work that can be done by themselves and their families. In many cases it would not pay them to employ a hired man. Indeed, cases have come under my personal observation where farmers found it more practicable to sell their farms and hire out with farmers who thought they could contend with the new adverse conditions. And presently these farmers who hired out followed the general trend of the rural population and moved

to the cities where they could have shorter hours and more attractive conditions.

The "New York Sun and Herald" had an editorial recently in which it spoke of the farmers going on strike. They are not going on strike, but they are limiting productions to what they can do themselves — and the result is the same. They are not doing this from desire, but through the compulsion of circumstances.

Daylight saving, however, is only one of the many methods employed to uproot humanity from the soil and enable the cities to commit suicide by starvation.

Critics of the tariff have shown how the protection of manufactures causes higher wages to prevail in the cities and withdraws men from the productions of food. Agricultural education and the farmers' movement have tended to centre the attention of the farmer on money-making — rather than on home-building — and that is disastrous. The farmer is keeping books, and as home-making cannot

be expressed either by single entry or double entry, he applies the dollar test to everything with the result that in many places food crops are being discarded for profitable cash crops, such as tobacco, sugar-beets, etc.

The farmer is finding out what crops do not pay in dollars and is discarding them — thereby increasing the various shortages. In order to make him efficient in this destructive work, governments are imposing income taxes and compelling the farmer to keep books. And no one is calling attention to the basic fact that farming is above all a home-making business and that money-making is secondary. Our pioneer fathers raised all crops for their own use, with the result that they had plenty and a surplus to feed the cities of those days.

The whole tendency of the time is to make the country more like the cities — to give the farm city advantages. Cities are not content with increasing their wealth and population. They promote radial railways and manufacture automobiles to bring the farmers to the

cities. They educate them to patronize the movies and follow the fashions. Every day the farms are becoming more like the cities. Farm children are given city educations and they develop city tastes. The world is mad on the building of cities. Some months ago an enthusiast sitting in the chair beside me in the lobby of a Toronto hotel showed me how the development of hydro-electric power on the Niagara River and the St. Lawrence would finally transform New York State and the Province of Ontario into one vast city from Manhattan to Port Arthur. And he added triumphantly:

"Then we could dictate to the world."

It sounded very progressive and alluring, but as I was waiting for the dining-room to open, the promptings of appetite led me to wonder how this great city of the future is to be fed.

The simple fact is that the country is getting so like the cities that it is stopping the production of food, and unless the tide turns the cities and the country will commit suicide

together. But as indicated in a previous chapter there is a door of hope. Our fathers laid the foundations of a country civilization, richer and more satisfying than any city civilization the world has known. If we turn in time and build on that foundation the predictions of all the prophets will be confuted.

Now the time has come to announce the new law, the law of reversal which has been touched upon in a previous chapter. It has already begun to operate and all that remains is for the majority to fall in line with it.

And the majority will do this.

In the great crises of the past it was predicted that "a remnant will be saved."

The time has come to announce the reversal of this law and proclaim that "a majority will be saved."

If you stop to weigh recent events, you will find that there is a sound reason for this proclamation. Since the signing of the armistice there have been strikes, both authorized and "outlaw," that interfered with the rights of

the majority of the people. And the people did not endure them tamely. In Winnipeg, Seattle, New Jersey, and elsewhere the people undertook to do the work that was being stopped by the strikers. In almost all these cases the volunteer workers went too far in their manifestations — forgot the need of adhering to legal methods. But they made it quite clear that the big, quaking, foolish majority is no longer in the mood to put up with the tyranny of noisy minorities. All strikes and disturbances in the transaction of business cause more trouble and suffering to the ordinary citizens than to those who are directly involved. And experience has shown that the ordinary people of Canada and the United States are not ordinary. On the battle-fields of Europe the privates on many occasions showed themselves as resourceful as their officers and as ready to cope with difficult problems. Those whose affairs are being interfered with by men who depart from constitutional methods to redress their grievances are

not an ignorant and oppressed mob, but men who have been accustomed all their lives to freedom and legal methods. They are not lacking in courage or initiative, and are entirely capable of calling "bluffs" of all kinds. It so happens that the "bluff" of some irresponsible agitators is the first that has been forced on their attention, and their response is the most cheering news we have had for many a day. It may mean the beginning of a better era. Most of the wrongs from which struggling humanity suffers are due to "bluffs" — some of them very respectable and imposing — and if the people start to call them we shall have a notable house-cleaning. Moreover, all these can be called without departing from the constitutional methods established by our fathers, and which our sons so heroically defended.

All this indicates that after the cities, Big Business, Labor, and even the Farmers' Movement have succumbed to the present passion for suicide, the majority will be saved.

In the days when salvation was only for the remnant, that remnant represented the minority that stood for the rights of humanity. The majority stood for autocratic or theocratic power and destroyed itself by its arrogance and greed.

The birth of Democracy changed all this. The majority now stands for the rights of man—of the plain citizen. Because there was so much to learn before Democracy could realize its possibilities we have been tyrannized over by minorities—bosses, bureaucracies, trusts, labor organizations, and other forms of absolutism. But the great mass of the people stand for individual rights and individual initiative.

The average citizen of the new world

"Stays to his home an' looks arter his folks;
He draws his furrer es straight es he can,
An' into nobody's tater-patch pokes."

All of them may not be drawing furrows; some of them may be engaged in non-essential occupations; but their instinct is the same. If

they are left alone they will leave other people alone. And there is evidence that if they are not left alone something is going to happen. Le Bon points out that the inert mass of the population represents the soul of a nation. If this is true the outlook is all that can be wished. In the new world there is an instinct for order that expresses itself sometimes without waiting for the processes of law. This impatience is regrettable, but the attitude is admirable. It indicates that the day of the remnant is passed and that the majority is to come to its own. The future may have trouble in store for the profiteers, agitators, bureaucrats, and others who are wailing that the world is going to the devil, but the great law of reversal is in operation and

"A majority will be saved."

CHAPTER XII

PRINCE KROPOTKIN'S COW

Some of my experiences led me to wonder if there is a correspondence course for economists and statesmen. Anyway, I have been coming into contact with thinkers, the perfection of whose theories can only be accounted for on the hypothesis that they are graduates of a correspondence school. They have world-shaping plans that could only be excused on the plea that those who propound them either know God's plan or have a better one. Only a correspondence school could give a man such sublime self-confidence. Still, the reading of many books on economics, and class papers, would have much the same effect as a correspondence course, and that probably accounts for the finished thinkers that are forever putting one down in arguments.

But this is a tough old world and politics

is a science too human to be put into books. The economists take no account of "human cussedness" or the instinct to do anything except what the wise of the world say that we should do. No matter how beneficent your theory may be, we will have none of it—and a good thing it is for the world that we will not.

Still, the correspondence-school statesmen and economists are so much a part of the life of to-day, with its agitations and movements and tiresome futilities, that one must give them some attention. The mildest of these world-shapers are clamoring for the nationalization of everything from railroads to cranberry bogs. Indeed, I have met with thinkers to whom all this would be merely a preliminary step. I have heard it gravely suggested, or rather vehemently suggested, that things will not be right in this world until all the inequalities due to education and variations of brain power are also wiped out. This would give us equality with a vengeance: the kind of blessed equality we have in the stable at

home, where the cattle are all chained so that the energetic red cow cannot get more than her share of the food. The simple fact is that in the new world social theories are being reduced to an absurdity, even before being applied. This is the land of violent contrasts, and the programme I laid out for myself has enabled me to see some of these contrasts at their sharpest. I have made it a point to hunt up friends of my youth who have either grown up with the country or have gone down under its progress. In one city on the Canadian prairies I found a friend so prosperous that he was living in the almost sybaritic luxury of a great hotel of the kind that show how railroading pays in Canada. Another friend was "down and out" in the same city, and lending an attentive ear to the wildest kind of propaganda. Being an old friend, the rich man poured forth the story of his prosperity and his wrath against those who are hampering capital and threatening to put an end to progress. Moved by the same bond of sacred friendship,

the poor man told of the greed and rapacity of which he had been the victim. The poor man had lacked what another friend called "the monetary clutch," and while he had seen wealth all about him, had been unable either "to have or to hold." How would it be possible for any one to hold the scales between these two men? I did n't try. I passed on to another city, where the same condition developed in another way. An old friend took me to his club, where I enjoyed luncheon with a number of men who were prosperous and satisfied. A few hours later I accidentally found myself at a gathering of city employees who were preparing for a strike. They advocated direct action with guns. "Why not?" they asked. "The Governments of the world are settling their differences with guns and high explosives and why should n't the down-trodden use the same method?"

It is almost certain that the social problems pressing for settlement will be settled here first. In one of the old lands a poet wrote:

"Lazarus sits as he sat through history,
Through pride of heroes and pomp of kings,
At the rich man's gate, the eternal mystery,
Receiving his evil things."

In that land I have seen the people of place and power pass through the streets entirely indifferent to the misery by which they were surrounded, while those who were in misery were so accustomed to that condition that they looked at their oppressors with dull apathy. Here it is different; this is a new country. Dives and Lazarus are both here, but they have known one another all their lives. They were brought up in the same town and played with the same pup. Lazarus received the same public school education as Dives, and perhaps beat him in his classes. He is lacking in respect for him, and if there is any way by which he can force a showdown while Dives is here — before he is in torment — he is going to force it.

But no matter what changes may be adopted, whether revolutionary or reaction-

ary, there is an irreducible minimum of work that must be done. The world must be fed and clothed.

Noticing that much is made of providing milk for children and invalids whenever a general strike is in progress, it seemed worth while to see how the best thinkers propose to deal with the matter in the new world they propose to give us. Remembering that a college president to whom I had mentioned the matter had given me Prince Kropotkin's "Conquest of Bread," I turned to it for information regarding the subject of milk. As might be expected he deals with it in the vague way of people who have no personal knowledge of cows. Just because wheat can be produced by spurts of labor at the proper seasons and requires no care while growing and maturing, he apparently assumed that the milk supply could be secured in the same way. Dealing with the provisioning of the city of Paris under the anarchistic Commune, he sums up the whole matter as follows:

"A population of three and a half million must have at least 1,200,000 adult men and as many women capable of work. Well, then, to give bread and meat to all, it would need seventeen and a half days a year per man. Add three million work-days, or double that number if you like, in order to obtain milk. That will make twenty-five work-days of five hours in all — nothing more than a little pleasurable country exercise — to obtain the three principal products: bread, meat, and milk, the three products which, after housing, cause daily anxiety to nine tenths of mankind. And yet — let us not tire of repeating — these are not fancy dreams."

One night before leaving home, I had to milk the cows, owing to an impending ball game, and while attending to this chore I fell to thinking of the milk supply under Communistic or Soviet rule. These poor people overlook the fact that the cows must be milked every day and twice a day. Under the five-hour-a-day rule the milkers would be different

every morning and evening, and if the necessary twenty-five days of work were distributed over the year, it is probable that the milkers would be changed every few days. Any dairyman will tell you that with such treatment the cows would probably go dry in a few weeks. Even if they did n't object to the frequent change of the milkers, their flow of milk would be greatly diminished, as they are not fond of strangers fussing with them. The truth of this was brought home to me by the fact that the red cow kicked at me when I sat down beside her and came to rest with her foot firmly planted on my big toe. If that happened to me, what would have happened to some one taking "a little pleasurable country exercise." But perhaps Prince Kropotkin had in mind some strain of cow that I have not yet heard of. He must know of some kind of cow that will give up her year's production of milk in a pleasurable round of five-hour milkings. Yet it is on the teachings of such men that the workers of the world

depend for plans to right their wrongs and make the world an ideal place to live in. That the condition of the workers should be improved every thinking man must admit, but they will find experience more helpful than the theories of dreamers. Their present plans not only assume that human nature can be changed by a revolution, but that cow nature can also be changed.

CHAPTER XIII

OLD HOME WEEK

Is n't it about time we had an "Old Home Week" for ideas? For the past few years our thoughts, quite naturally and rightly, have been abroad, and we have been grappling with world problems because they were more vital to us than the problems of our every day lives. But a time has come when we can safely come back to our individual interests.

Just now I am inclined to sympathize with the plain citizen who recently found himself obliged to spend an evening with a number of high-thinking friends who were having an improving conversation about world affairs. While the high talk was in progress the plain man was examining his rough and toil-gnarled hands, and he took advantage of a lull in the conversation to ask:

"Can any of you fellows give me a real and sure cure for warts?"

It was a dreadful anticlimax, but it expressed a feeling of weariness with great things that is becoming very common. We are in need of a mental rest. As Bill Nye phrased it, we are in danger of "spraining our thinkers" by grappling with things that are beyond our grasp. Every morning the papers have articles about such subjects as "A League of Nations to enforce World Peace," and so on, and so on. In order to deal with such things intelligently we must think for the planet. A country or an empire is no longer big enough for us. Every scheme for the good of humanity is a world scheme, and the world must be organized to fit it. No wonder the plain man loses his grip on it all and begins to think about his warts.

The curse of the present time is organization. Our civilization has woven about itself a web of organizations that will destroy it as certainly as the poisoned shirt of Nessus

destroyed Hercules. It is organization that makes Business Success possible, and it is under the exactions of Business Success that the whole world is writhing. Much, if not all, of the present-day unrest can be traced back to organized greed — either to the greed of capitalists or the greed of classes. By organizing they get power, and when they get power they abuse it to gratify their own selfishness. The trouble is not due to the principle of organization, but to the fact that we have allowed organization to degenerate into conspiracy. And conspiracy would not be possible without secrecy. If every organization formed under the protection of that one big organization, the Government, of which we are all a part, were subjected to a publicity as pitiless as the Day of Judgment, we would have no cases of three hundred and ten per cent and over. And I can see no sound reason why the workings of business and the operations of capital generally should not be subject to the closest public scrutiny. The Government is

forced to do business in public, under the constant criticism of a hostile Opposition, and yet it manages to get along. Even kings and presidents live in the white light that beats upon a throne, and every act that affects the welfare of citizens is open to examination. But the Kings of Industry and all the operations of Big Business must be shrouded in darkness and mystery. Nonsense! Honest business can bear the light of day just as well as honest government. Our Captains of Industry all claim to be serving the public. That is the excuse for the privileges they demand. Then why not let us see how they are serving it? Is it that they are too modest? I am afraid their modesty is much like that of Artemus Ward's noble Red Man who stole a blanket and a bottle of whiskey and then rushed whooping to the wilderness to conceal his emotion. Our Kings of Big Business are very anxious to conceal their emotion — and other things. It is true that they do a great service in building up our countries; but the difficulty is that

they want the title to all the buildings in their own names.

It does n't seem to be quite right to be talking about organizations and big organizers this way. I know that a great many people will be offended because they are quite sure they will never get to heaven unless they are organized and belong to exactly the right organization. Nevertheless and notwithstanding, I repeat the assertion that organization is the curse of our time — though it should be a blessing. All organization that is secret in its operations is a menace to the welfare of the people and should have the light turned in on it. It is in secrecy that abnormal profits are piled up. If a cheese factory can be run with the fullest publicity and yet make a decent success, I fail to see why a cloth factory or shoe factory should not be run on the same basis. We are allowing ourselves to be bluffed by the leaders of Big Business and we should be ashamed of ourselves. Few of the men we are cringing before have any real ability.

They employ it. All they have is a ruthless greed, and as ninety per cent fail it is probable that most of the ten per cent who succeed owe their success to luck. Turn in the light on the whole lot! We can then do honor to those who are conducting a fair business and rendering service for the rewards they are taking — and we can attend to the others. Implacable publicity would probably do more to correct the high cost of living than anything else. And no organization should be allowed to exist without the fullest publicity regarding all its actions.

Before the outbreak of the war, Judge Brandeis, of the United States Superior Court, wrote a paper about "The Curse of Bigness," which I would like to re-read just now if I could only remember who borrowed it from me. It is rather amusing to remember that he was dealing with trifling little matters such as the Standard Oil Company, railroad mergers, industrial corporations, trusts, and such things. Compared with the schemes that are

in the air to-day they were like nursery games. Yet he argued with much logic that when organizations get beyond a certain size they become inefficient and wasteful. Instead of serving the purpose for which they were organized they stifle progress and development. Big organizations do not encourage new ideas as little ones do. Being beyond competition, they become sluggish and reactionary. I cannot help wondering if we shall not have the same difficulty with the big schemes that are being promoted just now. After all they will have to be run by human beings, and there is a limit to human powers. Judge Brandeis showed that business schemes could become too big for even the colossal business brain of J. Pierpont Morgan, and it is just possible that there may be schemes of statecraft too big for the brains of Lloyd George and Mr. Wilson and the others who are grappling with them. And the trouble is that we are all grappling with them and overlooking the fact that the biggest achieve-

ment possible to democracy is to give every individual freedom to direct his own affairs. At the present time people have altogether too many ideas about fixing up the world, and too few ideas about the homely tasks of ordinary citizenship. Let us call in our far-reaching thoughts and see what we can find to do right at home. If all of us would do that, the need for world-shaping schemes would probably disappear.

I am afraid there is another check on big schemes that is being overlooked. Even before the war Captains of Industry were finding it hard to get men for their higher command. Only the other day I read an article which bemoaned the lack of men capable of filling five thousand and ten thousand dollar a year jobs. It was asserted that jobs of this kind are going begging because men of the right capacity cannot be found. There are too many men who are fitted for ordinary routine jobs, but only now and then is it possible to find men fitted for big executive jobs. When the work

of reconstruction is undertaken in earnest, it will probably be found that the dearth of the right kind of men is greater than ever. The war called for just this kind of men and they have been destroyed by the thousand. Even those who had it in them to do great executive work, and were not fated to lay down their lives in the cause of humanity, have had their energies turned into other channels, and it is possible that many of them will not be able to resume work where they left off. The best brains of the rising generation have been diverted by the war, and the supply of competent executives is likely to prove smaller than ever, just at the time when schemes are developing that will require them more than ever. It is easy enough to find dreamers who can think out schemes for the benefit of humanity, but it is very hard to find men with the necessary executive ability to put them into force. It is quite possible that we must give up some of our finest dreams for the lack of the right kind of men to carry them out. Human-

ity's losses in material wealth and man-power may be estimated, but its loss in mental and spiritual force is beyond computation. In the meantime the big ideas are being pushed forward, but we must not be too much disappointed if we are forced to return to a "day of little things" — which we are told is not to be despised.

Organizations, no doubt, have their value, but when overdone their effect is more than questionable. At the present time individual initiative, which is probably the greatest force for good in our civilization, is being benumbed and stifled by the mad passion for organization. In the matter of food production we constantly get news about this and that great organization that is arranging to investigate and take action, and the ordinary man gets an entirely wrong idea into his head. He thinks that with all the Government committees and commissions and public-spirited organizations at work, it is entirely needless for him to undertake the little he might be able to do by

his own efforts. This is a serious misconception; many great movements are started that are "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." While organized effort, properly directed, will undoubtedly accomplish great things, individual initiative has been the foundation of practically every success our country has known. This tendency to flock together into organizations whenever there is anything to be done is not an entirely healthful sign. Some recent experiences have led me to mourn the disappearance of an effective though somewhat undesirable type of citizen known in the past. In trying to define the kind of man I am thinking of, I remember a report of a scene in the police court in New York some years ago. A lawyer was examining the badly battered plaintiff.

"What did the defendant say to you on that occasion?"

"He said he would knock my head off."

"And what else?"

"He said he would mop the floor with me."

"And what else?"

"Er — also he done it."

There would be a great deal of progress in this world if it could be said after the plans suggested by each man — "also he done it." The trouble just now is that we all organize and nobody gets his head knocked off and the floor does n't get mopped up.

CHAPTER XIV

THE WARD LEADER

In Philadelphia, while being entertained by a friend, I met a ward leader of the new world that is to be. When I heard the familiar title "ward leader," memory cut back on the film a picture of my old friend "Biff" McGuire, ward leader for Tammany Hall. "Biff" held sway in a tough district, and in the words of Spencer he was "in a state of correspondence with his environment." Leaning against the end of the bar with his back against the wall to fend off a possible felon stroke, his pose was one of studied carelessness. One foot rested lightly on the footrail and at his elbow there was a bottle of his "Private Stock." In spite of his care-free attitude, his uneasy eye, even when he was absorbed in conversation, noticed every one who passed through the swinging doors. He did not nod acquaintance-

ship to all, but those whom he favored were more stimulated than they were by the ministrations of the white-coated bartender. From his corner he dispensed the high, low, and middle justice, bought drinks for his dependents and accepted drinks from men "higher up" who dropped in to consult with him. Altogether he was a heroic if sinister figure, much railed at by the better element. A philanthropist in his evil way he was the sole protector of those who were "fobbed with the rusty curb of old Father antic, the law," and of those whose misfortunes had submerged them beyond the care of decent society. He shielded them under his grimy ægis—in return for votes and other obscure political service. In his rough way he dispensed the only charity that these unfortunates knew, and at all times bore himself as one conscious of his power in shaping the destinies and controlling the affairs of one of the greatest cities of modern civilization. With the picture of "Biff" McGuire in the back of my head, I met the

new "ward leader," a gentle and cultured woman, luminous with the fire of public spirit. She held office in the Philadelphia League of Women Citizens, which has been organized according to the best traditions of the old political machines. To give some idea of the scope and purpose of this Woman's Movement, I shall quote briefly from a folder which she offered for my enlightenment.

THE NATIONAL LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS is a national organization of women who wish not merely to vote, but to use their votes to the best advantage.

THE ORGANIZATION HAS TWO PURPOSES — To foster education in citizenship and to support improved legislation.

The National League is composed of State Leagues.

The PROGRAMME is educational and legislative, i.e., to get behind needed reforms, to urge their support and adoption in the platforms of the political parties, and their enactment into laws.

The SLOGAN of the League is "Enroll in the Political Parties." It is organized to do legislative work in order to promote its programme.

It is NOT A WOMAN'S PARTY OR A SEPARATE POLITICAL PARTY. The League of Women Voters hopes to accomplish its purpose in two ways: first, by education, as to national and state human needs; second, by the direct influence of its own members who are enrolled voters in the already existing political parties. It is not partisan. It will not support or attack national candidates or national parties. To quote from the Constitution, "The National League of Women Voters urges every woman to become an enrolled voter, but as an organization it shall be allied with and support no party."

These be "prave words," but while I listened to her eager exposition of all the good that the League hopes to accomplish, memory played me another scurvy trick. I remembered the one hour of mirth I enjoyed in Ottawa during the Canadian Federal campaign of 1917. A wild-eyed man from Montreal had rushed up to me in the office where I had a temporary desk. Gesticulating furiously he poured out a terrible tale of what was happening in Montreal. In the slum districts all the police

court habitués were registered as "sisters of soldiers." In that election only such women as were the sisters, wives, mothers, or daughters of soldiers were entitled to vote. According to my passionate informant the election in the riding in which he was working would be controlled by the corrupt vote of these unfortunates. Under the conditions that prevailed in that election I knew it would be impossible to do anything, and when he brought down his fist on a desk and thundered, almost in the words of some forgotten poet,

"These are the deeds that are done in Montreal!"

I was moved to great laughter. I could not help thinking of a woman friend who had been telling me how the women voters would purify politics. She had even introduced me to Mrs. Pankhurst so that I might get the gospel of feminism from the lips of its prophetess.

How the women are going to handle this submerged vote is a problem that I have not seen discussed. Are we to have female coun-

terparts of "Biff" McGuire to herd these voters to the polls?

It seemed strange, and perhaps portentous, that I should have my first contact with the women voters of the United States in Philadelphia, where political methods "make the judicious grieve." What they will do can only be known after their votes have been cast. And if race hatred and narrow nationalism are to play an important part in the coming campaign, it will be interesting to see if they can be swayed by the emotional appeals that are certain to be made. Women are said to be more emotional than men, and it is not likely that the experts of scientific politics will overlook the work that may be done by the "sob-sisters." I have in mind some wonderful "sob-sister" stuff that was used in the last Canadian election. I have always suspected that it was written by a hardened male campaign writer — but that is of no importance. What is important is that the "psychology" of woman is to have a part in the already

complex problem of politics. It seems unkind to doubt that the woman will play a noble and beneficent part in the politics of the future, but I have some glimmerings of the methods that politicians may use to defeat them, and, to lapse into parody:

"I walked the city streets to-day
With the sombre ghost of Matthew Quay."

The best hope is that the swift intuition of women will enable them to see more quickly than men that the salvation of the democracies does not lie in political activity, but in the way in which every citizen attends to the little commonplace things of everyday life.

CHAPTER XV

THE NEW MASTER WORD

A POINT has been reached where I feel that I must write a chapter on psychology in relation to present-day affairs. Not that I know anything about it! Heaven forbid! But ever since leaving home I have been hearing about the psychology of this and that until the conviction has grown that an account of this dip into the world will not be complete without a chapter on the latest and most popular of our sciences. And it is not personal psychology that must be dealt with. It is mob-psychology —the most elusive of all subjects—that must be passed under review.

But there is no escape. The thing has been meeting me everywhere. In Toronto a hotel proprietor spoke lightly of the need of understanding the psychology of female help if one is to have good dining-room service. That centered my attention.

In Boston I had luncheon with a man who has made psychology his life-study and is widely known as an authority on the subject. We talked psychology, personal and general, for two blessed hours, and I was so much interested that I almost missed an appointment. I kept the appointment, however, and found that I had arrived "at the psychological" moment.

In New York a movie magnate talked about the psychology of people who patronize grand opera.

At an art auction-room I heard about the peculiar psychology of collectors of art objects, rare books, and *et cetera*, and of the need of understanding it if one is to deal with them successfully.

Presently I met a dealer in high-class stationery who was almost in despair through need of a phrase that may be used instead of "*de luxe*"—which is now outworn through too much use, though it was once "an excellent good word before it was ill-sorted." His

urgent need was for a word or phrase that would "appeal to the physchology of women." As words are the commodity in which I deal he appealed to me for help. Apparently he had sized up my psychology properly, for I appreciated the compliment and racked my memory for something suitable. Finally I remembered a descriptive phrase that I had noticed in a catalogue while looking at the hangings and furniture of the Kaiser's throne-room, that were offered for sale while I was in New York. It was a melodious phrase that appealed richly to three out of the five senses. When he heard it he thanked me profusely and hurried away to have it patented as a trade name.

While a collector of Japanese prints was showing me his treasures we discussed Oriental psychology.

There is no doubt of it. If I am to make these hasty pages, even in a small way, a "mirror of the Passing World," I must grapple with psychology.

Psychology met me at every turn. Bell-

boys and Pullman porters who understood the psychology of the travelling public knew that a few ineffective passes with a whiskbroom would make us part with our small change. Restaurant waiters who were masters of psychology knew that showing an interest in the food they served and asking if it was entirely suited to our taste made tips imperative — no matter what our convictions and good resolutions on the subject might be.

There is no doubt of it. "Psychology" is now the master word of the world, and as mankind has at all times groaned under the tyranny of words and phrases the matter must be looked into. We have the historic example of "divine right" which tyrannized over the world for many centuries. But let us deal with those words that have influenced our own lives. First we were made to step lively (itself a modern phrase of much potency) by "the strenuous life." Then by a natural reaction we tried to recuperate with "the simple life" and "the rest cure." After that we had

a period when "efficiency" hurried the joy out of life. Then came "propagandas" that were designed to enslave the world to all kinds of far-reaching schemes. Now we are up to the neck in "psychology."

The above instances are recorded merely to show the need of dealing with the question if I am to be right up to the minute. And I know practically nothing about it. Why, oh, why, did n't I read Le Bon more carefully, instead of treating his huge volumes as a new and amusing kind of fiction? Still I can remember a little.

The laws governing mob-psychology have been crystallized in the formula, "affirmation, repetition, authority, contagion." Affirm a thing strongly enough, repeat it often enough, have it thundered forth with authority, and finally a contagion of conviction will sweep the multitude. It might be shown that every leader and master of men from Moses to Lloyd George was a master of mob-psychology — for it is a curious fact that history always

lends itself to interpretation by the theory that is popular at any given time. And contemporary life also invariably lends itself to the same treatment. Let us take a humble instance.

The successful promotion of a patent medicine follows exactly the best methods of mob-psychology.

The merits of the nostrum are affirmed strongly in advertisements of all kinds from the daily press to the bill-boards and scenic monstrosities. These affirmations are repeated everywhere and at all times. Then we have authoritative testimonials showing the before and after conditions of men and women eminent in all walks of life. Presently a swift contagion sweeps the crowd and we all begin taking "Pale Pills for Peculiar People" or "Dope Drops for Disgruntled Digestions." And the shrewd promoter of the nostrum acquires a great fortune, goes into society, and, if he lives in a country where titles prevail, buys a title by one of the many devious methods of securing such honors.

Certainly it is clear that humanity is at present prostrate before those who are masters of mob-psychology, either through learning or by instinct.

And yet it is only a few years since the majority of us knew no more about psychology than the Long Island fisherman who was beating his way against the wind to a favorite place for bluefish. A hasty motor launch passed him and he spelled out the name on the bow.

"P-s-y-c-h-e," he spelled. Then he spat into the brine and exclaimed disgustedly:

"Well, if that is n't the doggondest way to spell fish I ever seen!"

If that fisherman is still alive he probably claims to understand the psychology of bluefish and chooses with scientific exactness the right kind of bait to use in dumming for them.

"Surely this is not the sun-bright
Psyche, hoar with years and hurled
From the Northern shore of Lethe
On this wan auroral world."

All of which goes to prove that the world is

now passing through a psychological phase — though it is infinitely more in need of potatoes than of psychology. "We that have good wits have much to answer for" if we do not correct this folly. But of course we must go about it in a proper psychological way. We must affirm the world-healing quality of potatoes, repeat it on all occasions in season and out, have our campaign endorsed by men of power and authority — and then perhaps everybody will be infected by a longing for potatoes and will see the need of planting and hoeing the potatoes themselves. If they will have psychology let them have a surfeit of it — and then perhaps they will get back to the simple, everyday things of life that alone are of importance.

CHAPTER XVI

LOYALTY

ANOTHER Master Word that needs to be investigated is Loyalty. To say that a man is disloyal is to make him an outlaw. But what is Loyalty? It is certainly time that we knew. During the Great War there was a confusion of loyalties that has not yet been cleared away. Most of us have been overworked on the score of loyalty.

Personally I have been harangued to show unquestioning loyalty to:

Canada.
The Empire.
The Allies.
The Protestant Religion.
A political party.
A corporation.
My personal friends.

No doubt there were other loyalties that

were urged on my attention, but the list given is sufficient. And all these loyalties conflicted at one time or another during the turmoil of the war. Though I tried, with all the earnestness of a soul face to face with the world's greatest crisis, to do the loyal things at all times, I have been accused bitterly at different times of having been disloyal to one or another of the great causes that demanded my support. But as this happened only while I was being loyal to one or another of them, my conscience is not troubling me. I am merely confused. No one could possibly be loyal to all of them at all times. Out in Vancouver I read in the papers that they were teaching the school-children to sing a patriotic song of which I remember these two lines:

"We love the land where we were born
But we love the Empire more."

As the Empire is still a somewhat undefined aggregation of conflicting interests I cannot help wondering how those children may act in some crisis of the future. Suppose the

Imperial interests at some time became centred in Africa or India, would a Canadian be supposed to be more loyal to Africa or India than to Canada?

In the days when kings were absolute the matter of loyalty was quite simple. Unless one showed unquestioning fidelity to the king he might expect to hear the curt sentence:

"Off with his head!"

But now the people are supreme in all countries of importance, even though the institution of monarchy may be continued and properly venerated. In England, for instance, where monarchy is more firmly established than in most countries, loyalty is defined to the satisfaction of all good subjects in this popular quotation from Junius:

"The subject who is truly loyal to the chief Magistrate will neither advise nor submit to arbitrary measures."

This attitude is reflected in the phrase "His Majesty's Loyal Opposition." It is conceded that a member of Parliament who honestly

opposes Government measures is just as loyal to his king and country as one who supports the Government measures. The important attitude of his loyalty is honesty. If that is conceded, his loyalty is rated as high as that of any man.

During the war this kind of loyalty was largely in abeyance. To oppose the Government of the day even in its most appalling mistakes was regarded as disloyal. And apparently there are many representatives of the people who found that this simplified the business of government and would like to continue it. But governments in all countries achieved so much unpopularity during the war that this reactionary point of view is not likely to prevail.

At the present time one hears it said frequently that steps must be taken to educate people in true loyalty. This being the case it becomes necessary to know just what loyalty is. In a letter to a group of Boy Scouts Sir Robert Baden-Powell gave an explanation

that is helpful. Taking the case of a football player who had kicked a goal as an example, Sir Robert wrote:

> He gets the applause, just because he had the luck to be in his place to put the ball through, when the whole team had had the work of getting it to him by hard and unselfish work in passing it on. They all deserved the applause.
>
> Well, that is how we get on and are successful anywhere, not by one fellow trying to win glory and prizes for himself, but by everybody bucking up and playing his best so that his side shall win. Do this for your patrol, do it for your troop, do it for your factory or business, do it for your country. If you stick to that you will be a true Scout — one who plays for his side and not for himself.

An analysis of this message from the man who has perhaps done more than any other to educate the future generation to loyalty shows that in his opinion loyalty is a high order of unselfishness.

This is excellent, but it makes it more than ever needful for us to be careful that this admirable unselfishness is not betrayed. Though

loyalty sometimes appears to be the only necessary virtue, it may be abused to the point where it becomes a vice. Loyalty without intelligence may degrade a man to the level of a beast.

Take the dog, for instance. Loyalty is his most outstanding virtue. He may be useless in every other way, but he will be loyal to his master. Unfortunately he is just as likely to be loyal to Bill Sykes as to the finest man in the community. And if Bill Sykes wants to do it he can "sick" his dog on the finest man in the community or on any one in the community and the loyal dog will obey.

Dog loyalty of this kind is just what leaders and rulers of a certain type are always clamoring for. If they can get a sufficient following of dog-loyal people, they can grasp power and loot the treasury or do anything else they wish. By "sicking" dog-loyal people against other nations crafty leaders can win elections, raise tariffs, and provoke wars.

In a democracy dog loyalty is perhaps the

greatest enemy of progress and good government. Consequently it is very necessary for us to examine all loyalty cries and loyalty propaganda with great care. We should see to it that the loyalty demanded is of a kind that a self-respecting man may cherish and not a dog loyalty that will make him a tool of noisy and selfish leaders. Loyalty is the most generous of human emotions — the basic virtue of the Christian, the lover, the friend, the patriot. But just because the loyal-hearted man is so generous and unselfish he is constantly being preyed upon by the designing and the selfish. It was by educating the loyalty of a submissive people to one selfish end that the rulers of Germany built an empire that became a menace to the world. Loyalty is a force that builds nations, but it can also hurry them to destruction. If the world is to become truly democratic we must learn that loyalty to the State means loyalty to ourselves. If we are to realize Lincoln's democracy — "government of the people, for the

people, by the people" — we must at all times guard it with Shakespeare's loyalty:

"To thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

CHAPTER XVII

THE SHIVERING TEXAN

ONE morning I rode down Broadway on a cable car and whiled away the time by reading the names on the business signs and windows. This led me to meditate on the evident failure of the Zionist movement as far as New York is concerned — but that is neither here nor there.

My meditations were presently interrupted by the man who sat next to me. He was visibly and audibly shivering. It was a cool morning in May, but I felt comfortable. At last he blurted:

"Say, I did n't expect to run into any weather like this. When I left Texas five days ago it was 105 in the shade."

He was evidently dressed for that temperature. While sympathizing with him, I admitted that I was from Canada and accus-

tomed to cooler weather, besides being provided with heavier clothing. The reference to Canada started him going, and all I had to do was to sit back and listen. His people had gone from Canada to Texas. He had many relatives in the neighborhood of Montreal. He was of Irish descent. He had no sooner mentioned this fact than he began to express his hatred for England. Take her treatment of Canada in the war, for instance. She had used the Canadian army for the worst fighting and had saved her own troops. I hastened to assure him that his view was not in accordance with the facts and did not represent Canadian opinion. He listened incredulously, and fearing that I might stop his flow of opinion I did not make serious attempts to set him right. It was my business to find out what men of his type were saying and thinking, so I encouraged him to go on. And he went on. As I listened, my wonder grew at the thoroughness with which modern propagandas are carried on. This man from Texas — from thou-

sands of miles away — had exactly the same kind of misinformation that I had heard whispered in Canada while the war was in progress. England — he always said England instead of Britain — had made no sacrifices compared with those demanded of her colonies. He expressed the deepest admiration for Canada — for the heroism of her soldiers and her spirit of self-sacrifice; and having done that he felt quite free to abuse the British Empire and especially England.

As this shows a lack of understanding of Canada's relations to the Empire that I had already noticed in other Americans, I shall deal with it briefly. It is as if a man who was on friendly terms with one member of a family felt himself at liberty to hate all the other members and especially the parents. There seems to be a need of a propaganda to let our American friends know that while Canadians are justly proud of their own country, they are also proud of the Empire to which they belong and have a filial feeling for the coun-

tries from which they have been derived. Through a natural evolution Canada has already achieved that form of loyalty without which A League of Nations will be useless. Canadians are loyal to their own land and to the group of developing nations comprised in the Empire. I know there are Canadians who call this a divided loyalty and regard it as impracticable. If this view is sound, then there is no future for the League of Nations, for a League that cannot command loyalty cannot endure. Unless we can develop loyalties beyond the borders of our own country, all efforts to abate the horrors of war are bound to be futile. In developing a loyalty that extends beyond the borders of their own country to the bounds of Empire, the Canadians are giving a leadership that the world needs. They have set their feet on the only path that leads to better things for humanity. And they have done this by a natural evolution rather than in obedience to the recently enunciated principles of A League of Nations. It is true that

important changes in her relationship to the Empire will be needed before Canada can claim complete nationhood, but when they have been effected by gradual evolution, her loyalty to the Empire will be strengthened rather than weakened.

Just how Canada can aspire to nationhood, while continuing to be a part of the British Empire is a matter that causes confusion both at home and abroad. This is because of an imperfect understanding of the evolution of the British Empire. Critics of this relationship are led into error through clinging to the old meaning of the word "empire." They assume that it is used as when applied to the Roman Empire and the great empires of the past. In these the power was centralized in one supreme government. In the British Empire a new relationship has been evolving. Power is being decentralized. Each of the Great Dominions is practically self-governing while continuing to be a part of the British Empire. There are still some matters to be adjusted regarding the

decentralization of authority, but the whole tendency is toward the development of a league of British nations, each self-governing, but loosely held together in a family alliance. British statesmen have discovered, or have had it forced on their attention, that the ties of mutual trust are stronger than the centralized power of the old empires. They have found that the handclasp is stronger than the handcuff. The bonds of faith and friendship bind the Empire together in the face of danger more securely than any bonds ever devised by Imperial power. Canada's position in the British Empire cannot be better expressed than in the words of the late Sir Wilfrid Laurier, spoken shortly after the outbreak of the Great War:

> We are a free people, absolutely free. The charter under which we live has put it in our power to say whether we should take part in such a war or not. It is for the Canadian people, the Canadian Parliament, and the Canadian Government alone to decide. This freedom is at once the glory and honor of Britain, which

granted it, and of Canada, which used it to assist Britain. Freedom is the keynote of all British institutions. There is no compulsion upon those dependencies of Great Britain which have reached the stature of Dominions, such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and such Crown Dependencies as India. They are all free to take part or not as they think best. That is the British freedom which, much to the surprise of the world, and greatly to the dismay of the German Emperor, German professors, and German diplomats, caused the rush from all parts of the British Empire to assist the Mother Country in this stupendous struggle. Freedom breeds loyalty. Coercion always was the mother of rebellion.

At the present time the British Empire is really an evolving League of Nations — perhaps the only one the world will see for some time.

If a league of free British nations, with the same language, laws, and traditions, cannot work together in harmony, it is folly to hope that the diverse nationalities of the greater League can work together harmoniously. In working out the proper relationship among

themselves the nations of the British Empire can set an example to the world that will be of more value than anything they can achieve by force of arms or skill in diplomacy.

Of course I said nothing of this to the shivering Texan. He was really more interested in heavy underwear than in national problems and was talking largely to keep his mind off his physical discomfort. And talking came easy, for there was little thought back of it. He was merely repeating what he had heard or had read. His mind had taken color from every propaganda with which it had come in contact. To what he had heard from his parents about Ireland and England he had added what he had learned in the public histories of the United States. Back of "The Ancient Grudge" exposed by Mr. Owen Wister in his recent volume he had a more ancient grudge. The Sinn Fein propaganda had found in him an eager disciple.

And yet he was a loyal American — so loyal that he did not need to mention the fact.

He revealed this loyalty by asking if there was a ferry at the Battery that would take him to the Statue of Liberty.

The talk with the Texan gave me food for thought that will last me for a long time. How are we to get a better feeling between the nations of the world when we are all liable to have our opinions formed by histories and propagandas. Perhaps the most hopeful feature of the Texan's conversation was the frequent use of the remark, "If one can believe anything he reads in the papers." It is possible that the demands made on our credulity will defeat themselves. We may reach a point where we will treat histories and political campaigns as sensible people have learned to treat neighborhood gossip — as something on which one should not base opinions. In their neighborly relations civilized communities have got beyond the duel and the feud, and have learned to settle differences by man-to-man discussion, arbitration, and the orderly processes of law. It is asserted that the world

is now a neighborhood of nations, but we cannot have a neighborly world spirit until we make a bonfire of our histories and close our eyes and ears to propagandas. We are having altogether too much irresponsible world gossip, and if the paper shortage develops into a real famine it may be the greatest blessing that could happen.

CHAPTER XVIII

MANY INVENTIONS

ONE day I enjoyed luncheon with an old friend and we essayed a theme hard as high. I doubt if what we talked about would be intelligible to all readers, and I am none too sure that we understood ourselves, but as there seems to be a public craving for such intellectual flights I shall venture a brief digest of our talk.

But first a word about this friend. He is a finished product of an older civilization than that of New York. Whenever I walk with him in what Mr. Henry James carefully describes as "the Fifth Avenue," I feel as George Warrington did when he walked with Pendennis: "I feel as if I had a flower in my button-hole." His life moves entirely among the most precious objects of art and literature, among masterpieces of sculpture, painting, printing,

book-binding, and what not. And withal he is very much alive and in touch with the world in which we live. After this introduction I shall let him rail at our wonderful civilization.

"Invention is the curse of the world. With our machinery and efficiency we are speeded up so that life has been spoiled. I wonder who made the first invention."

That led to a pretty discussion. After dealing with the subject back and forth, we decided that the most guilty man the world had ever known was the man who invented the first wheel — who discovered that something round could be made to revolve. That discovery was the starting-point of all our modern machinery and destructive speed. Take away the wheel and the world would come to a standstill. I joined him in reviling that far-off, long-ago inventor.

Then we followed the first wheel — was it perhaps a potter's wheel? — and followed its deadly evolution. The oldest wheels recorded in art are the wheels of chariots — war chari-

ots, of course. There you see the earliest tendency of the war spirit that culminated in our great war of machinery. The warrior used the wheel to make a chariot to give him an advantage over his enemies. The development of the wheel has been involved with war from the chariot wheel to the whirling propellors of aeroplanes.

This line of thought led us to realize that war is the great stimulator of invention. Such inventions as the aeroplane were perfected more completely in the four years of war than they would have been in centuries of peace. We found that it would be easy to hold a brief for war as the force that has been perfecting our civilizations of many inventions. (Solomon said, "Man was born upright, but he has sought out many inventions.")

But what does it profit us if the highest use we make of our inventions is to increase our efficiency in battle? If we invent long enough and cleverly enough, we may yet start a war in which we will destroy the human race.

That awful possibility is the present preoccupation of scientific research.

We are told that the next advance of science may be the discovery of how to release atomic energy. Molecular energy, brought under control through the unstable equilibrium of certain artificial compounds, has given us the gun, the cannon, the bomb, the mine, and all the other infernal masterpieces of high explosives.

What would atomic energy give us?

Sir Oliver Lodge has told us that the amount of atomic energy in one ounce of matter would be sufficient to raise the fleet that was anchored in Scapa Flow to the top of the highest mountain in Scotland. Then what would happen if we released the atomic energy in tons of matter? It is certain that if man ever masters the secret he will go in for quantity production of atomic energy. And what then?

To realize the dire possibilities of this thought we must digress and approach it from a new angle.

Those of us who date our meagre scientific knowledge from reading done in the last quarter of the past century had our imaginations fired by the nebular hypothesis. I do not know whether it has current authority, but it was a wonderful theory and will serve our purposes to-day. I quite realize that if I am to avoid destructive scientific criticism, I should consult some up-to-the-minute scientist and get my facts right, but a care-free conversation between friends is not to be "cabined, cribbed, confined" in that way. If I let the public overhear our talk I shall expect them to listen with unquestioning courtesy. I have purposely avoided asking the aid and leading of a scientist in this matter because most of the scientists of my acquaintance live wholly within three dimensions and have put a padlock on the third. But the conversation of friends demands the freedom of a fourth dimension in which our Space and Time are but points on the superfices of a comprehended Infinity and Eternity. Now will you be good!

To return to the nebular hypothesis. According to it the planets were flung from the whirling mass of the sun as it was in the process of shrinking. Neptune was naturally the first to be thrown off and the others followed in due order. Would it not be reasonable to suppose that the oldest of the planets — the one that was first thrown off from the sun and is farthest from it — would be the first to cool and become habitable? But it is known that all the outer planets except Mars are in a gaseous state. Is there any possible explanation of this curious state of affairs — this apparent contradiction of logical results which gives us the last planets solid and the earlier planets gaseous?

If the earlier planets cooled to solid form and developed life analogous to ours, it is probable that they lived by war and invention. If these forces developed as with us, it is probable that a day came on each of the old planets when its puny inhabitants got control of atomic energy, started a last war, and blew

their planet back to its constituent gases. Atomic energy is probably a force of the fourth dimension and if released in three dimensions would have about the same effect as that of a high-explosive shell passing through a piece of tissue paper and exploding as it passed.

The destructive discovery progressed across the ecliptic until only four planets are left in solid form. Mars may now be preparing for the last proud war and we are on the verge of a culminating discovery of the disruptive force of atomic energy. Unless something checks our rage for discovery, and war is within reasonable possibility, the whole planetary system may be blown back to chaos — and so fulfil Poe's amazing figure of the alternation from Chaos to Order and from Order to Chaos as "the systole and diastole of the heart of the Infinite."

After this exhausting flight my friend faced the High Cost of Living in the form of the waiter's check, passed me a cigar that cost a dollar, and in a humble taxi we joined the

whirling civilization that speeds on wheels along "the Fifth Avenue," and doubtless whiles away its idle time in discussing the war and who won it.

CHAPTER XIX

AN EXPERIMENT IN MODESTY

ONE afternoon toward the end of my trip I made a mistake — for which I am now duly thankful. Through weariness, or carelessness or over-confidence or a human desire to talk frankly to somebody, I dropped my pose of the Affable Stranger and freely admitted to an American whom I had engaged in conversation that I was gathering material for a book. I also went as far as to indicate the nature of my investigations. At once he assumed an attitude of helpfulness. All that he knew about the subject of international relations was at my disposal — and he knew a surprising lot of things that were of no importance. You meet men of this kind wherever new books are discussed — or any kind of human achievement. Parasitic helpers attach themselves to every kind of work from farm-

ing to statesmanship. In fact this characteristic must be universal, for Fabre has a passage on it in his description of scarabs. When one of them finds a treasure others help him in just that way. I am being explicit on the point, for the theme of this chapter is modesty as it affects the relations between countries. Being somewhat modest in my claims to modesty I feel competent to discuss the matter with the necessary intellectual aloofness.

"The trouble with Canadians," said the candid and helpful American, "is that they are too cocky!"

That made me tingle to my last pin-feather, but fortunately I am of Scotch ancestry and the obvious witty retort did not flash back instantly. In fact I was rather dazed, but somewhere deep down in my consciousness I felt the need of taking the criticism in a friendly spirit, for if a man starts out to promote harmonious relations he must not be quick to take offence. Not knowing what else to do I smiled affably, which was quite

in keeping with the rôle I was playing. Evidently my smile had the proper blend of modesty and humble enquiry, for my mentor at once fluffed up his feathers and proceeded:

"As a matter of fact we get along much better with the English than we do with you."

That gave me a flash of insight. Evidently this man had never fathomed the deep guile of much English modesty. The course for me to pursue was clear. At once I became a shrinking violet. As a matter of fact there have been times when I have wanted to knock a man down for being half as modest as I must have looked at that moment. But the effect on the American was all that the most Machiavellian subtlety could desire. It would hardly have been surprising if wings had sprouted on his shoulders and he had flapped them and crowed.

"The fact of the matter is that Canada is still a colony of Great Britain and not a nation, and no amount of boasting or assertion

to the contrary will change the actual status."

Wholesome truth this, but not to be borne patiently were it not for the rising tide of laughter within. Every moment the American was becoming more and more cocky and exhibiting the very quality he was condemning in Canadians. The temptation to egg him on was irresistible.

"Still," I ventured modestly, "it would be kind in Americans to overlook this youthful folly of ours. At the present time there is a growing bitterness between the two countries that may become serious unless a great deal of wise tolerance is shown."

"Oh, it can't become serious. Perhaps it might a hundred years from now, when Canada may have a population approaching ours, but just now—" And he made a large "shoo fly!" gesture that dismissed the whole matter as unworthy of consideration.

There was no question about it. I must go away from there or there would be an explosion that would reduce my gravity to a total

loss. And when I finally got away from the flood of kindly candor that was sweeping over me I got the finest thrill of all.

I had mastered the art of that exasperating English modesty that had always been my despair! This was more than an intellectual triumph! It was balm to a bruised and wounded spirit!

One time in my salad days two London clubmen entertained me kindly and provoked me to entertain them. By making the customary modest deprecatory remarks about Great Britain, they induced me to unbosom myself with honest candor. After two months at the seat of the Empire I felt competent to tell them many things that were amiss. And being a native-born Canadian I was able to astonish them (my word!) with my accounts of the resources and possibilities of Canada. Almost twenty years later I admit freely that most of my criticisms and boasts have been proven true, but that is not the point. The point is that those two Englishmen got me to

turn myself inside out for their amusement, but it was not until I had suffered several more experiences with English modesty that the truth dawned on me with humiliating force. Knowing how they must have chuckled over my expansiveness afterwards, I used to writhe every time I thought of it. Sometimes in the stillness of the night I would remember the incident and be tempted to jump from bed, dress, hunt up those Englishmen, and beat them with a coarse colonial directness. But now the hurt is healed. Having had that American at my mercy — as the chauffeur of the borrowed car would say, "I owned him for a few minutes" — I felt a new sense of power in expressing national egotism and meeting it. Come to think of it, Canada must have a national status or I could not have achieved it — but let that pass. Ever since meeting the charge of national "cockiness" with modesty, I have been in the mood to wave my hand at those two Englishmen through the mists of memory and confess a bond of Imperial broth-

erhood. I have proven that on occasion I can be as modest as they are.

But pshaw! what am I doing? I am boasting about my modesty! That is the trouble with even the most excellent virtues! They must be practised in moderation. True modesty is the crowning grace of high achievement. But conscious modesty is an offence to all who are forced to endure it.

However, there is a test of modesty which may be worth having in mind. When the rewards of achievement are within reach, if you find the modest person shrinking in the limelight and taking everything he can lay his hands on, you may appraise his modesty at its true worth.

All who feel that their withers have been wrung by this chapter are at liberty to think this out in its varied implications and apply it as they choose.

CHAPTER XX

MY PRIVATE MAHATMA

BEFORE leaving home I had a conference with my own private Mahatma.

"What is the greatest need of the world to-day?" I asked.

"Sunshine."

"You mean — ?"

"Sunshine. Just the ordinary, everyday sunshine that you can get at this blessed minute on the south side of the straw-stack. Not moral or spiritual or intellectual sunshine, but the kind that is making the hens cackle — just listen to them — the kind that the red cow over there is soaking into her skin. Just let the brand of sunshine that is spilling over the world to-day work its way into your system and you will forget all your troubles. Get into the sunshine and keep there."

That was an unusually long speech for my

Mahatma — proof that he was very much in earnest. To the ordinary, unilluminated eye he was simply a farmer — "a goodly, portly man i' faith, and a corpulent." It was just for these qualities that I chose him as my Mahatma. At the present time everybody who can afford a ouija-board — or is worth fleecing by a medium — is trying to get in touch with the next world. All sorts of fakirs with unhealthy complexions are reaping a harvest from the credulous. But the passion of my life is to get in touch with this world — with the dreary, wonderful, tragic, exhilarating, proxy, poetical world that we have been born into. And I find it just as hard to get in touch with this world as the seekers find it to get in touch with the next. That is why I chose a good, fat, material Mahatma who is quite obviously in touch with such gross things as food, shelter, clothing, the sunshine, the fresh air, and the good brown earth. While others are trying to establish communications with outlying planets, I am trying to get into com-

munication with the planet on which I live. Instead of trying to lease a private wire to the Invisible, I want, as far as possible, to learn a little about the visible and tangible and audible, and smellable, and tasteable world in which I am obliged to sojourn. In this humble quest my Mahatma is a great help. He does not say cryptic things or babble trivialities in the name of the mighty Dead — the mighty Damned or the mighty Blest. He tells me the right way to plant potatoes and prune apple-trees, and our communion is blest with eupeptic content. So when he pointedly directed my attention to sunshine as the greatest need of the world, I felt it was my duty to listen.

Though the business of life drives me to the city from time to time, my soul has been smitten by a claustraphobia that makes it impossible for me to become a slave of the streets. Though I seem to leave the sunshine behind when I leave the country, I can always find refreshment in the parks. Because of this, though I have travelled across the continent,

visited great cities and met many men, my happiest and most vivid memories are of the parks. In Stanley Park, Vancouver, I sat under the giant firs and cedars and wondered if the world would ever again know the leisured centuries needed to bring such trees to their royal perfection. In Lethbridge, Regina, Saskatoon, and other cities of the plains I sat under transplanted trees that are struggling for beauty in spite of inclement winters. I have enjoyed the sunshine and shade on Boston Common and in Madison Square Garden, and all have left me memories of the tonic and healing powers of sunshine.

My most vivid recollection is of a park in Regina, and that is because of a glimpse I caught of far-away sunshine. A letter from France had caught up with me at Regina and I read it in the park. It was from a boy in the trenches, and among other gossip of the battle-line he told me how he and a chum were sunning themselves by a muddy dugout one morning when the German drive was at its

fiercest. Things were looking gloomy for the Allies and the boy had been going over the bad news.

"Oh, well," said his chum as he puffed at his pipe, "in spite of all that the sun is shining and the leaves are coming out."

So when my Mahatma spoke of the need of sunshine I remembered what it had meant to two boys facing death in Flanders, and his advice seemed good. But I wanted to sound him out on other matters.

"What you say may be true, but the great demand of the present time is for laughter. Everybody wants to be amused."

"Are you sure of that?"

"Well, editors want amusing articles and stories, publishers want amusing books, theatrical promoters want amusing plays and scenarios — lecture bureaus want amusing lectures — and so it goes all the way along the line."

"That only goes to prove that amusing people has become a business without any more

spontaneity in it than the manufacture of breakfast foods. And the people who want to be amused are the people who have easy money to spend. Have you noticed that mothers who have lost sons want to be amused, or that any of the millions who have been touched by the cruelty of the war are eager to laugh?"

"The prevailing opinion seems to be that we should forget the war."

"Certainly. Let those who made profits out of the war laugh and forget that they were enriched by the world's agony — that they piled up wealth while brave young men were being mangled, smothered, drowned, shattered in the war. If they remembered such things they could not enjoy their profits. By all means make them laugh and take your wages for your hireling mirth. Make the laborers shut their eyes and open their mouths with laughter so that they cannot see the disasters towards which they are hurrying. Make the young laugh so that they will not realize

the heritage that is being passed to them by the older generation whose pride, greed, and folly have come near to ruining the world."

"The press dispatches say that all the capitals are mad with revelry. It is even said that tourists have been dancing on the battlefields."

"Quite so. And do you know what it all looks like to me? It reminds me of the wakes that used to be held around the coffins of the newly dead. Humanity is now holding a hideous wake over a dead civilization."

"So bad as that?"

"Oh, it may not prove to be so very bad a thing. The sun is still shining. The forces that have produced all the good there ever has been in the world are still at work. It is just possible that in the new world at least the unrest and turmoil that have been troubling us are but the first movements of a change for which we have been preparing with words if not with actions."

"I do not understand."

"We have been calling the new world a crucible in which all nationalists have been thrown to produce the true American or the true Canadian. Have you ever watched a crucible and noticed what takes place in it?"

"I once saw a copper crucible in British Columbia and a silver crucible in Massachusetts and iron crucibles here and there, but I never studied them carefully."

"Well, the only crucible I ever saw was the little one, made by the blacksmith, that I used for running bullets when a boy. I used to get big wads of tea lead from the grocer and melt it in the little crucible. When the heat got to the lead it would sink down to a pool at the bottom. The top would be covered with gray scum and blazing scraps of paper. Then I would pour the bright, clean metal into the bullet moulds. When it was all poured there would be left behind the gray scum from the top and some slag at the bottom. And I am thinking that when the good metal of nationality is ready to be poured we will leave be-

hind the scum of parasites at the top and the slag of agitators at the bottom."

"That sounds good, but when will it happen?"

"It may happen this year and it may not happen for a hundred years but of one thing I am sure, and that is that there is plenty of good metal in our crucible."

Whereupon my private Mahatma knocked the ashes from his pipe and walked home across the fields through the glowing sunshine that he loved.

CHAPTER XXI

THE SOUL OF CANADA

It is all very well for men like William Lloyd Garrison to exclaim, "My country is the world." I cannot lay claim to so broad a humanitarianism. Though I do not see the need of hating any other man's country, there is one country that means more than any other to me. How could I reprove the people of the United States for loving their own country — for being jingos, if you will — when I know that their home love cannot exceed mine?

Let me confess. Often and often I have thought of writing something about the love of my native land, but was restrained by the feeling that it was too intimate and personal to be exposed for the entertainment of the public. Goodness knows I have gossiped about almost everything in the most shameless way, but there was something about love of the

land that seemed too sacred to reveal even to intimate friends. But now I am emboldened to hang my heart on my sleeve and talk to those of my readers both in Canada and the United States who have felt the love of the land and know what it means. I have the good fortune to be living on the farm on which I was born — the farm which my father cleared. Although I was born too late to take a hand in the work of clearing, I learned the history of every acre before an open fireplace many years ago. The history of the clearing of the land, the first crops, the names and characters of the horses and cows on the place, are so interwoven with my youthful recollections that I seem to remember them all as if I had taken part in the battle with the wilderness myself, and had shared in all its triumphs and sorrows. Something of this farm struck a tendril into my heart which neither time nor distance could break. It is the only spot on earth that ever gave me the feeling of home. Even after being away for years I have sat

down in New York or London, England, and have been as homesick for this farm as a little boy who makes his first journey away from his mother's side. At any time I could close my eyes and see the quiet fields, and I would wonder what crops they were sown to. At all times it was my place of refuge, and, when I finally returned to it, it was with a feeling that my wanderings had ended, and that I could settle down and enjoy life where I belonged.

At the present time this love of the land appeals to me as being especially significant. The turmoil in the world to-day recalls to me the great purpose which moved my father and mother to undertake the task of making a home for themselves in the wilderness. They wanted to establish a home where their children and their children's children could be free. I know the oppression and hardship from which they escaped in the old world, and the toil and hardship they endured in the new before their dream was realized. It is high time that we who are native-born realized the

price that our parents paid for the freedom and liberty we have enjoyed. The freedom that they won by their toil and sacrifice is a heritage worthy of our sons who did battle so that it may endure.

There have been times when I thought that the men of my own generation were escaping too lightly in the work of establishing a Canadian nation, but I think so no longer. This new nation was founded by our freedom-loving and infinitely patient fathers, and defended by our freeborn and heroic sons. It is true that we came too late to take part in the pioneer work, and were too old to take our place in the trenches. But on us there rests a heavy responsibility. It is for us to pierce through the confusions and selfishness of political strategy and establish the truth and justice that alone can make a nation endure. We must be true to the great purpose of our fathers and the splendid courage of our sons. Here is something that strikes deeper than party politics, that demands the best that is

in us of wisdom and sanity. If we fail to do our part nobly the whole fabric of nationhood will fall. Love of the land carries with it a responsibility that may try us as sorely as the wilderness tried our fathers or as the battle-front tried our sons. And for us there is no escape. The future of Canada is in our keeping.

Whenever I read history, even the history of Canada, I feel like the American soldier who was wallowing through the mud after the battle of Spottsylvania Court-house. Saluting his officer, he exclaimed bitterly:

"If ever I love another country, damn me!"

History, as written, is largely a record of crimes and blunders that are exposed or whitewashed according to the political bias of the man who is writing the history. Historians, as a rule, are more given to the use of whitewash than a political investigating committee. Fired by a patriotic desire to picture for us a country worth loving they suppress much, glorify everything that seems worth glorifying, and give us something that is no nearer

the truth than the crayon portraits you see in many country parlors. If historians told the simple truth, every nation with a scrap of decency would be trying to live down its history, just as a convict tries to live down his past. And yet — and yet I confess to a love of Canada that is not simply a patriotic emotion, but a passion to which my whole being vibrates. To me Canada is a living soul — a Presence that companions me in the fields — a mighty mother that nourished my youth and inspires my manhood. Whenever I think of Canada I remember Carman's wonderful lines:

"When I have lifted up my heart to thee,
 Then hast thou ever hearkened and drawn near,
And bowed thy shining face close over me,
 Till I could hear thee as the hill-flowers hear."

When I strive to fathom the secret of this love I find that it is due to the fact that I learned history, not from books, but from the lips of the men and women who made Canada — that I learned the history, not of the gov-

ernment, but of the people. The spirit that broods over me to-day is the same that danced among the shadows beside an open fireplace while I listened to endless crooning tales of the sufferings and hopes of the pioneers. The Spirit of Freedom that led them into the wilderness became my spirit, and their dream of a free Canada became a living spirit that danced about me in the flickering light of the flaming back-logs.

By some trick of the imagination I have always thought of Canada as the blithe spirit that haunted my childhood. But in my childhood she did not always come in the same guise. Sometimes she would come gliding out of the depths of the forest, a shy and dusky sprite that would take me by the hand and teach me the love of flowers and birds and the infinite mysteries of Nature. Again she would come as a country maid, glowing with the joy of life, who would lead me through the fields where she reaped the harvest and bound the sheaves. Always she walked in the sunlight

and though her moods were full of song and care-free laughter

"She had the lonely calm and poise
Of life that waits and wills."

As the years passed and the burdens of life began to press, I lost the intimate touch with the spirit of my country. But always I was conscious that back of the turmoil she was working her will and shaping the destiny of a free people. Though I might be stunned and disheartened by the greed of commerce and the clamor of politics, I could still see dimly that the spirit that companioned my youth was at work wherever men and women labored. And her love was not only for those who could claim it as a birthright, but to all who came to Canada in quest of freedom. Creeds and nationalities and old hatreds were nothing to her. No matter what wrongs or abuse of power there might be in high places, the spirit of Canada was nourishing the weak, teaching them the lesson of freedom, and moving to her place among the nations.

Then came the day when the war trumpets sounded and the soul of Canada flamed to her full stature. She heard the call of the oppressed and hurled her legions against the oppressor. Not hers

"To mix with Kings in the low lust for sway,
Yell in the hunt, and share the murderous prey."

Nourished in freedom she gave battle for freedom. To-day I see her, as I saw her in the time of war, roused but unafraid, and watching with questioning eyes the sacrifice of her sons. Standing heroic on the soil that gave her birth she marks with glooming brows the madness of the nations. This is the hour of her decision. Woe alike to those who would stay her hand and to those who would hurry her to destruction! Born of the dreams of humble people who toiled and served for the freedom on which she was nourished, Canada must be forever free! As a free nation within the Empire she has given lavishly of her best, and as a free nation she must endure!

CHAPTER XXII

A LAND OF UPPER BERTHS

THERE are times when a man can be very dense. During the past year I have crossed the continent twice — stood by the "wine-dark" Pacific and mused by "the salt, unplumbed, estranging" Atlantic — and all through the journey, both going and coming, a piece of news that will interest all travellers was "tickling my consciousness with the tip of its tail." But not until my last day's travel did I make the discovery that aroused both amusement and wrath. The story of it will now be told for the first time because it will do as well as anything else to show a kind of international tie that binds more securely than the arrangements effected through diplomatic channels. Business takes no heed of boundaries that are defined for patriotic reasons. It recognizes them only when they can be used

to its advantage. This incident will also show how enterprise and organization may defeat democracy, and that although we may be equal before the law our case may be different before a Pullman car porter.

At different times during the past few years I have meditated writing an essay on America — including the United States and Canada — as "The Land of Upper Berths." No matter how far ahead I planned my trips and tried to make reservations I could never get a lower berth in a sleeping-car. But there were always uppers to be had and night after night I clambered aloft. Always trying to make the best of everything I finally got so that I rather liked them on account of the better ventilation, roomier quarters, etc.

From time to time my nose for news sniffed at the prevailing conditions and I wondered vaguely at the type of passengers who were always so fortunate as to have lower berths. Instead of being "The beautiful, pampered women of the wealthy bourgeoisie," they were

usually brisk young business men. Not only did they get the lower berths, but having greater facilities for getting out of bed in the morning they were always first at the wash-bowls and took an unconscionable time at their morning ablutions; shaving expertly while the train speeded around curves and grooming themselves like bridegrooms, while we poor upper-berthers sat around, yawning sleepily and admiring the backs of their silk undershirts and the nice warm suspenders that cost as much as an ordinary man used to pay for a suit of clothes. They primped and preened and left the rest of us only time to wash sketchily before reaching our destination. Then they stepped from the train in flawless form and ready to do business. Having had this experience over and over again from Toronto to Vancouver and from Vancouver to New York, I should have guessed something, but I was dense. That sleeping-car feeling dulled my perceptions.

Out in Calgary I was given an explanation

of the phenomenon that put me on the wrong track and lulled my sense of outrage. I had protested to the porter of one of the palatial hotels because he failed to get me a lower berth to Lethbridge.

"Too late," he said cheerfully. "All the lower berths going both ways are reserved two weeks ahead."

"What's the reason?"

"Everybody is travelling. If I was n't a married man and tied down I would be travelling myself."

Certainly everybody did seem to be travelling, for the hotels were crowded to the limit and one had to telegraph a week ahead to get reservations. Many times even that precaution failed. Often I have slept on a cot in a corridor, and on several occasions when the corridors were full I got a berth on a cot in the manager's office.

But the lower-berth gentry never had any trouble of that kind. They would walk right up to the clerk's desk and register with an air

of authority utterly impossible to a man who has been sleeping in a top berth and is looking dishevelled after dressing hastily. And they were never disappointed. While others were sitting around waiting for some one to check out so that they could get even an inside room opening on an airshaft, the travelling princes would be led to the elevators by obsequious bell-boys and personally conducted to palatial rooms with a southern exposure and a bath. Having a keen sense of my own carelessness and lack of foresight, I always humbly attributed my misfortunes to my own shiftlessness and mildly envied men who could have their minds so constantly fixed on sublunary affairs that they always got the best of everything.

Finally I got what I thought was a possible way out of my troubles — at least as far as lower berths were concerned. Often I had been told that if I came around about an hour before the train started I might get a lower berth. Some one who had a reservation might fail to turn up and if I was on hand I might be

the lucky one to get that lower berth. As I never put much faith in the suggestion I did not put it to the test, but when coming home from New York last week I had to come a couple of days sooner than I expected and arrived at the ticket office about an hour before the train started. The impossible happened. I got a lower berth. I don't know when I have felt so puffed up. At last I was on terms of equality with the aristocrats of the travelling public. Their "gallusses" might still make a finer showing than mine in the dressing-room, but as I should n't have to wait for the porter to bring me a ladder I could probably beat them to the washbowls in the morning. The country habit of early rising would stand me in good stead in a competition of this kind. All the way up to Poughkeepsie I felt the dignity of being a lower-berth passenger and kept aloof from the common herd of people who have to climb to upper berths. Being new in my class I did not feel quite up to interviewing other lower-berthers and discussing high

matters of international relations with them. Once during the evening a Georgian from Atlanta asked me for information and my reply made him so sad that perhaps it was as well that I kept to myself. He asked me if there were any bars handy to the train when we should get to Niagara Falls, Canada. I was obliged to break the news to him that the nearest bar would probably be in Montreal. His distress was pitiful. Like almost every one else in the United States he thought that all Canada is wide open. And just think of it! He might have taken the trip to Montreal just as easily as the trip to Toronto. He was holidaying anyway. But I have wandered from my story.

While crossing the lake from Lewiston to Toronto I had dinner and engaged in conversation with a well-set-up business man who was placed at the same table with me. Being full of pride over that lower berth I casually mentioned the wonderful luck I had had on the previous night. He smiled a superior smile.

"I travel quite a bit," he said loftily, "but I am never troubled that way."

Here at last was a *bona-fide* lower-berther who might be induced to enlighten me.

"Indeed?" I insinuated.

"You see I am a member of —— and it attends to all such matters as getting lower berths, hotel accommodations, and choice theatre seats for its members."

That was a large and illuminating piece of news to be given out in one sentence. I registered polite interest, being careful not to arouse his suspicion by any show of eagerness. As I expected, he went on and expanded his theme. He did a great deal of travelling, but by being a member of this organization all he needed to do was to state his requirements a day in advance and he would be properly looked after on the trains and in the hotels either in the United States or Canada. They always had plenty of reservations ahead so that they could look after all travelling members. They held these reservations until an

hour or so before the trains started and then returned those they did not require. He paid an annual fee of moderate proportions which he regarded as an insurance premium — insuring comfort in travel. He did not explain how the hotels and theatres are approached so that rooms and seats may be secured, but it is managed all right. Not a bad arrangement for the favorites of fortune, but how about the ordinary public? Are not Pullman cars, hotels, and theatres operating under licenses or charters insuring equal opportunities for all? If not, why not?

CHAPTER XXIII

EPILOGUE

After all, the most delightful thing about a visit to the cities is the trip home. I take no joy in seeing sky-scrapers so high that you have to swallow your Adam's apple three times before you can see to the top of one. And the streets are crowded with abominations of noise and speed that make the foot-passenger from the country get about like a whirling dervish. And you find the men you know all working like mad for other people, so that they can earn money with which to hire other people to serve them with the necessaries of life. They get salaries from corporations that enable them to buy the products of other corporations that are all intent on charging all the traffic will bear. This sort of thing is doubtless very businesslike and modern and up-to-date, but if I went back to it I should

feel very much as if I were being put through a sausage-mill to appease the hunger of some monster whose appetite I could not understand. I am afraid my powers of reasoning are not what they used to be, for although I can see the homely common sense of raising potatoes and vegetables and apples and such-like things for my own use, I cannot figure out where I should be benefited by living the strenuous life so that I could earn enough to buy potatoes and apples of a poorer and somewhat faded character from some one else. As nearly as I can see, our methods of handling and distributing our food products merely take away from the quality and add to the price, and no one is benefited but those incomprehensible people who devote their lives to accumulating profits instead of to acquiring leisure and enjoying life. The problem is too deep for me.

I thought I loved the country before, but this time I see it in a new light. After I had left the last great city and began to watch the

trees whirling past the car windows I had a sense of companionship never felt before. They seemed so much alive and so serene and friendly that I began to quote:

"Leaf by leaf they will befriend me
As with comrades going home."

The wild trees of the forest — all too scattered — were best. They had an air of independence and privacy, as if they might be the amused custodians of world-old secrets that they guarded even beyond the surprisal of those whom they had admitted to fellowship — after long probation. Even the orchards — reared in captivity — looked as if they were aware of their importance in the scheme of things and knew unfathomable mysteries. After weeks of talk about all manner of feverish and unimportant things, the smiling taciturnity of Nature was reassuring and healing. The clear air was laden with the balm of forgetfulness. As I watched the rushing moving-picture show I felt that it was worthy the contemplation of a God, and knew that I

was privileged in being allowed a glimpse of it and a glimmer of its significance. To those who love the cities they may be not simply endurable but glorious in times of plenty, but to those who love the country, the country is the perfect home, rich in never-failing fountains of delight and inspiration. Before many months have passed thousands may be forced to choose between them.

My choice has been already made and I have no regrets.

THE END

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